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LITURGY

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- Rev. Fr. Lonappan Arangassery

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LITURGY

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Editorial

What is remarkable about the achievement of the Second Vatican Council in calling for a renewal of the Church's liturgical life, is that the Council Fathers did so without appealing to any explicit theology of the sacraments, such as that of scholasticism. In this respect the Council Fathers were like the early fathers of the Church, who preached and wrote about Christian worship in a pastoral rather than speculative manner, using biblical rather than metaphysical language. The Council fathers' appeal for reform was therefore based not on philosophical presuppositions but on their own experience of the inner dynamics of worship and their own awareness of social need. What the Council gave the Church was not a new theology of the sacraments but a new attitude toward sacramental worship. Thus it was an attitude which was biblical rather than scholastic, and pastoral rather than academic.

In the opening paragraphs of Chapter I of the Constitution on Sacred Liturgy, the fathers again and again use the language of the Scriptures to describe the nature and importance of liturgical worship. For example, concerning the sacraments of Christian Initiation and Eucharist they observe that "by baptism, men are plunged into the paschal mystery of Christ: they die with him, and rise with him (cf. Rom. 6:4; Eph. 2:6; Col. 3:1; 2 Tim. 2:11)... In like manner, as often as they eat the supper of the Lord they proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes (cf. 1 Cor. 11:26)" They invoke the image of Christ the high priest developed in the Letter to the Hebrews, and connect it to the concept of the Church as the Body of Christ presented in the Letters of Paul. "Rightly, then, the liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Christ," which is simultaneously "an action of Christ the priest in his Body, the Church." and from this unity of Christians with each other and with their Lord in their worship, especially Eucharistic worship, they conclude that "the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the fountain from which all her power flows."

In our present issue we have two studies on Christian Initiation basing on the east-Syrian patristic tradition. During the past few decades many important manuscript discoveries and extensive research on the part of the scholars have led to an increased knowledge of the early tradition, doctrine and liturgical practice of the East-Syrian Church. Lonappan Arangassery develops the subject on Baptism and the Oil of Unction according to Mar Abdiso. The theme helps one to understand how we can reach God-experiences through natural realities. Thomas Thumpeparampil OFM Cap. explains Christian Initiation according to the Liturgical Homilies of Mar Narsai. He gives a short biographical sketch of Narsai and then analyses the two homilies on Baptism. The East-Syrian Baptismal tradition is clearly unveiled in this article. Thomas Mannoramparampil sets forth in his article the horizontal dimension of Syro-Malabar Divine Liturgy, which is also rooted in the East-Syrian tradition. He mainly focuses on the communitarian aspect of the Holy Qurbana. Rev. Philip Tovey's article "He descended to the Dead," is a liturgical study on Holy Saturday. Though not directly liturgical in content, the article by Paul Pallath is very pertinent as it includes certain general observations on the obligations of Christian faithful regarding the preservation of the patrimony of their Church.



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The Baptism and the oil of Unction according to Mar Abdiso

Introduction

It had been the magnanimous salvific plan of God to reveal Himself to man, the crown of creation, in the things that have been made and later through the prophets and in these last days by His Son. Having completed His mission in the world, He ascended to His Father leaving the mission of manifesting the God of Jesus Christ to the whole world with the Church. The Church in turn manifests the Love and Life of God in many and varied ways, and especially through the Sacraments to man, for he remains a creature with all its limitations. But the modern man with his highly sophisticated scientific knowledge and intellectualism and least 'God-experience', tries to communicate his "God-experience" through those signs, symbols and concepts that are his creation, for his pride prevents him from availing himself of the signs and symbols taken from the natural life of man and used by the God of revelation, Christ, the holy apostles and the fathers of the early Church.

In this context, the treatise of Mar Abdiso on the Sacraments in general, and in particular on the Baptism and the Oil of unction we

discuss here, is thought provoking. He has left behind him an orientation towards God-experience, through the natural realities: symbolic of Christian realities and a basis for a systematic sacramental theology fully based on the Scriptures and the fathers of the Church. For our study I have divided this paper into three parts. The first part gives a brief sketch of the author and his works with short history of his church. The second and third part deal with vision of Mar Abdiso on baptism and the oil of unction respectively. The paper ends with a short appraisal.

I. Mar Abdiso

A. The Background of the Author

As to the exact date of the origin of Christianity in the Persian empire, it has been established that the Gospel of Jesus Christ came to Edessa at the end of the first century, even if the story of Abghar receiving baptism from Thadeus (St. Addai) be considered mythical.¹ From Edessa the Faith spread to the other parts of the empire. The Church and the liturgy developed from the palestine community through Antioch and Edessa, with minimum Greek influence.²

1. AZIZ S. ATIYA; A History of Eastern Christianity, New York, London, 1968, p. 242-245.

2. Ronald G. Robertson; The Eastern Christian Churches: A brief survey, Roma, 1986, p.1

Selucia-Ctesiphon became the centre of this Church and the head came to be called 'Catholicos' instead of the title 'Patriarch', from around 400 A.D.³ The Catholicos used to be consecrated with his own suffragans.⁴ The Christological controversies and the subsequent condemnation of Nestorius in the Council of Ephesus in 431, and the persecution of 'nestorians' in the Roman empire and the persecution of the Christians in the Persian empire for their suspected loyalty towards Rome led the East Syrians to declare virtual independence in the Council of Markabta - Tayiahie in 425 and definitely at the time of Patriarch Babai I. In 779 the patriarchal residence was shifted to Bagdad.⁵

One may be surprised to observe the amount of misfortunes and persecutions the Church has undergone. Although these reduced the Church to a minority, the inner strength and dynamism helped her to expand and flourish through missionary activity as far as Mangolia, Tibet, China, Arabia, Central Asia. In general from 8th to 13th century, she had a glorious period and by 1318, it is estimated that there were 25 to 30 metropolitan sees and about 250 suffragan dioceses with an average of 8 to 10 episcopal sees for each province.⁶ This glorious period is also to be marked for the Church's attempts towards union with Rome.⁷

From the fourteenth century following the glorious period, the East Syrian Church underwent a steady decline accelerated by the invasions of Timur Lane (1396-1405).⁸

The author Mar Abdiso⁹ came to considerable prominence and esteem as the last erudite and famous writer of the glorious period of the Church under Patriarch Yahallah III. He was a monk and bishop of Sinjar-Shiggar and Beth Arabaye for five years and later in 1290 he became the metropolitan of Nisibis and Armenia. He died in the year 1318 shortly after the synod of Timothy II the then Patriarch.¹⁰

B. Mar Abdiso and His Works

He was the most famous codifier of the canon law in the East Syrian Church and his 'Nomocanon' on the subject is known as the Book of Sunahadus; his two works: "Collections of the canons of the synod" and "Order of Ecclesiastical Judgements" were declared by the Timothy II in 1318 to be the official publications of the Church.¹¹ Many works of Mar Abdiso are lost and they are; 'A Biblical Commentary; 'The life of our Lord on Earth, a Treatise Scolasticus Against Heresies!, 'Mysteries of the Greek Philosophers, 'Letter from Alexander the great to Aristotle on Alchemy', 'Twelve discourses on all

3. ARCHDALE A KING, The Rites of Eastern Christendom, Vol. 2, Rome, 1948, p. 256.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. pp. 256-265.
6. Robertson R. G. The Eastern Christian Churches: A brief survey, Roma, 1986. p. 1.
7. R. Rabban, Chaldean Rite, NCE, Vol. 3. p. 427.
8. ATIYA A. S. A History of Eastern christianity, New York, London, 1968, p. 271-276.
9. KING, A. A; The Rites of Eastern Christendom, Vol. 2; Rome, 1948, p. 271.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid. p. 271.

sciences together with some miscellaneous Arabic Texts etc. His introduction to the Trinity and incarnation Symbolum, Table of Church Orders and Laws', 50 Spiritual poems called 'Eden Paradise' 'The books of Jewels', 'Book of foundation of Religion are preserved, either in Syriac or Arabic.¹² Thus Mar Abdiso is rightly called by Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII as "a profound exegete, theologian, philosopher, and historian."¹³

C. The Book of Marganitha (The Pearl)¹⁴

The Pearl is brief; but the doctrines that are exposed by the author points to his erudition and orthodoxy which may be a matter of reflection for those who look at the doctrines of the East Syrians with suspicion, for the Pearl could be said to be exposing the official view of these christians with an apostolic tradition.¹⁵ The immediate incentive for the author to write this book on the verity of christianity in 1298, was the injunction of Catholicos Patriarch Yahaballah III.¹⁶ The book has, "briefly treated of the origin,

roots, plants and branches of the teaching of the Church, and has divided it into five parts, each part subdivided into five chapters."¹⁷ Our attempt here is to study briefly the 3rd and 4th chapters of the fourth part dealing with baptism and the oil of unction.

II. Baptism According to Mar Abdiso

The author, Mar Abdiso, begins his treatise on baptism with a simple description which brings out the meaning of the word 'Baptism'. He says: Baptism is the immersion in and the washing with water.¹⁸ The Greek and Syriac nouns¹⁹ for baptism also have the same meaning attributed by our author.

Various Forms of Baptism

Basing on the above description of baptism as immersion and washing, our author proceeds to explain the various forms of baptism.

12. AZIZ S. ATIYA: A History of Eastern Christianity, New York, London, 1968, p. 14.
13. MAR O' DISHO; The Book of Marganitha on the Truth of Christianity, Eng. trans. by MAR ESHAI SHIMUN, Ernakulam, 1965, p. 1.
14. ABDISO, *Ibid.*, p. XXV. This English translation was done by Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII in 1965 and published at Ernakulam, Kerala, India. The Latin translation with some omissions was published in 1838 in Rome by Cardinal Mai and the full text appeared in Mosul in the year 1924.
15. AZIZ S. ATIYA; A History of Eastern Christianity, New York, London, 1968, p. 302.
16. MAR O' DISHO; The Book of Marganitha on the Truth of Christianity, Ernakulam, 1965, p. XXIV.
17. *Ibid*; p. XXV.
18. *Ibid*; p. 51.
19. The Greek noun is 'Baptisma'. Less commonly the word 'Baptismos' is also found. The word stems from Bapto which means to dip or to immerse. In the technical religious sense as an institution. Cf. MULLER, "Baptism", pp. 54- 58. The Syriac noun is mmodizha (ܡܡܕܝܙܗ) The root- ܡܕܝܬܐ means to dip in/under water, to bath, to wash etc. Cf. SMITH, *Dictionary*, p. 416.

1. The Ordinary Bath

This is the washing of the impurity from the body. Putting in the words of Abdiso, it is "the washing of the filth body."²⁰ He says that this type of washing is a common practice among the ordinary people, in order to remove the dust and filth from the body.²¹

2. The Legal Washing

The second form of immersion or washing of which Mar Abdiso speaks is "the washings according to the usages of the law."²² Numerous are the examples for these legal and ceremonial washings in the Scriptures, especially in the book of Leviticus and Deuteronomy.²³ According to the author one attains "purity towards God from all carnal uncleanness"²⁴ as it was believed by people. Here already we see the growth in the understanding of the significance of immersion in or washing with water.

3. Ablutions in the Traditions of the Elders

The third form enumerated by Abdiso is the ablutions "of the tradition of elders such as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, beds

and bathing after coming from the market before eating."²⁵ The evangelists criticising the extreme pharisaic legalism, refers to this practice of the elders mentioned by Mar Abdiso.²⁶

4. The Baptism of the Baptist John

The baptism administered by John the Baptist is cited by the author as the fourth Baptism or immersion. He says, "Fourth, the baptism of John, whereby he preached only repentance and the forgiveness of sins."²⁷ Although the author is brief in explanation of the baptism by John, he wishes to stress that this baptism was only an external sign of the change of heart (*Metanoia*) and forgiveness of sins. Thus he projects the inferior nature of the baptism of John with the expression "only", while presenting an improved significance of immersion in water.²⁸

From what have preceded with regard to the various forms of immersions we come to grasp the upward growth in the meaning and significance of immersion. From the ordinary bath he takes us to immersion for the attainment of purity towards God; and from there to immersion as a

20. MAR O' DISHO, *The Book of marganitha on the Truth of Christianity*, Ernakulam, 1965, p. 51.

21. The prophets see in these ordinary washing, interior and moral purification. cf. Is. 1:16; Ez. 36:25; Zach. 13:1.

22. MAR O' DISHO, *The Book of Marganitha on the Truth of Christianity*, Ernakulam, 1965, p. 51.

23. Lev. 15, 17, 13:16-18; Deut. 23:11; Nom. 49:19, 2 King 5:14.

24. ABDISO, *Marganitha*, p. 51; The Hebrew word for the ritual cleansing of the leper by the priest in Lev. 15:11 is "Tābal" and it is translated in LXX as *Bapto* Cf. MULLER, "Baptism", pp. 54ff.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

26. Mt. 15:2-3; Mk. 7:3-5, 8:1. Some of the ancient authorities use the word 'baptise' instead of 'purify'. Cf. R. S. V. C., N. T. p. 38. The Greek word used for washing of cups is *Baptismos* and washing prior to eating is *Ebaptisthe* Cf. Mk. 7:4; and MULLER, "Baptism", pp. 54-58.

27. MAR O' DISHO, *The Book of Marganitha on the Truth of Christianity*, Ernakulam, 1965, p. 51.

28. Cf. Mt. 3: 5-12, Jn. 3:5, Acts 13:24, 19:4. Cf also MULLER, "Baptism", p. 55; NOAKS, "From New Testament Times," pp. 80-81.

preparation for the messianic age through repentance and forgiveness of sins. Now he invites the reader for a better understanding of the baptism of Jesus and the Christian baptism.

5. The Baptism of Jesus

According to Mar Abdiso, the baptism of our Lord is also an immersion. He calls it the fifth immersion.²⁹ The author affirms, though not explicitly, the uniqueness and the superiority of the baptism of Jesus our Saviour for various reasons. The baptism of our Saviour is superior to the others because:

a. The baptism of our Saviour is received through the Holy Spirit.³⁰

b. It is received for the gift of adoption³¹ of sons; for the resurrection from the dead³² and for everlasting life.

c. The spiritual circumcision: The author says that this baptism is a circumcision made without hands. He cites the words of St. Paul to clarify the point, from the letter to Colossi-

ans.³³ He says that the circumcision in the Old Testament was a sign (external) denoting the belongingness of the circumcised, according to the flesh, to the family of Israel.³⁴ In the similar way, making a comparison the author says that the baptism in Jesus Christ, our Lord is also a circumcision; a sign of the spiritual relationship of the newly baptised in Jesus Christ, to the New Israel which is the Church.³⁵ And this relationship is spiritual and is not of the flesh. The characteristic of this new Israel according to Mar Abdiso, is that they are those who are called (chosen) and they are the children of God.³⁶ In order to support his argument he quotes the verse 12 of chapter one of the Gospel according to St John.³⁷

6. The Baptism of Blood

Mar Abdiso also speaks of a baptism of blood. For explaining this form of baptism the author interprets the words of Jesus himself recorded in Lk. 12:50, which says, "I have a baptism to be baptised with, and I am oppressed until it is fulfilled".³⁸

29. ABDISO, *Mrganitha*, p. 51. The influence of the teaching of N. T and the Fathers of the early centuries on the significance of immersion and emersion, the Old Testament types of baptism can be perceived here. cf. Mt. 3:5, 1:33, for the Baptism of Jesus; cf. Ex. 14:21-31, Joshua 3, 1 Cor. 10:1-2, 1 Pet 3:19-21, Jn 7:38, Rom 6. 1-4; Col 2:12 etc for O. T. Types or figures of baptism; and refer DUNCAN, *Baptism*, pp. 51-67, 129-132; BROCK, *Holy Spirit*, pp. 75-93; DANIELOU, *The Bible and the Liturgy* pp. 35-53 and 70-113 MITCHELL, "Four Fathers", pp. 37-56 for the teaching of the Fathers and for explanations of O. T. types.

30. Ibid., p. 51

31. Ibid., p. 52, cf. also 2 Cor. 6:18; Gal. 3:29; 4: 2-7; Eph. 1-5; Rom. 8:23.

32. Ibid., p. 52. cf also Rom. 6:2-5, 23; Col. 2:12.

33. Ibid., p. 52; cf. also Col. 2:11

34. Ibid., p. 52 also Gen. 17:10-14, Ex. 12: 44-49; Jer. 9:25-26.

35. Ibid. p. 52; cf. Rom. 4:11; 2:29; Eph. 1:13; Acts 7:51.

36. Ibid., p. 52.

37. Ibid., p. 52.

38. Ibid., p. 52 cf also. Mk. 10: 38-39; Jn. 12: 27; 18:11.

7. The Baptism of Tears

A seventh form of baptism as seen by our author is the baptism of tears. He says that this type of baptism has basis in the teachings of the Fathers.³⁹

The last two forms – the sixth and the seventh – of baptism are considered by Mar Abdiso as intimately connected with the baptism of our Saviour, which is an emblem of death and the resurrection.⁴⁰

8. The Matter and the Form of the Baptism

Basing on the words of Jesus, in his dialogue with Nicodemus as narrated in Jn. 3:5, Mar Abdiso writes that the matter of baptism is pure water. The above said Scripture text reads, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he can not enter the kingdom of God."⁴¹

The form of baptism is the Trinitarian formula. The reason for the same is the command of the Lord himself before ascending to His Father, as depicted to us by the Evangelist Matthew in 28:19. It says, "Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."⁴²

III. The Oil of Unction According to Mar Abdiso

As already been said the treatise on the oil of unction is dealt with in the fourth chapter of the fourth part of the book *Marganitha*. Mar Abdiso

includes the "Oil of Unction" in his list of Sacraments.⁴³

A. The Apostolic Origin

At the very outset the author attributes the origin and authority of the use of the Oil of Unction to the Apostles. He says, "The Oil of Unction is an Apostolic Tradition, originating from the oil consecrated by the Apostles, and which by succession has been handed down in the church of God to this day."⁴⁴ Although Mar Abdiso considers the Oil of Unction as a distinct sacrament, the early church took time to come to this understanding. Even then the administration of the sacrament was done together with baptism.⁴⁵

B. The Various Forms of Unction

The ordinary meaning of the word 'unction' is anointing.⁴⁶ In order to explain clearly, the author brings in an analogy between the various usages in the natural life and anointing in the context of Old and New Testaments.

1. Unction in the Natural Life

Mar Abdiso, to put the concepts clearly, speaks about the properties of the Oil, in the physical realm. He says, "As to the natural properties of oil, we know that the most eminent artists, after having completed a picture with all its rich colouring, anoint it with oil, in order that it may not easily be injured or receive damage when brought into contact

39. Ibid., p. 52.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid., p. 52.

43. Ibid., p. 45.

44. Ibid., p. 53. For the practice of the Apostles cf Acts 8: 14-17; 19: 1-6.

45. Ibid. p. 46.

46. S. SZIKSZAI, 'Anoint' *IDB* Vol. 1, pp. 138-139.

with other objects.⁴⁷” Thus the purpose of anointing, thanks to the natural properties of the oil, is to preserve the soundness of the object anointed or to protect it from injury or damage.

2. Unction in the Old Testament

Proceeding to the anointing in the Old Testament, the author speaks of the anointing according to the Law only. He sees two types of anointing in the Old Testament which was administered to persons who were set apart for Yahweh; the Kings and Priests. He says, “The Divine Book (Bible) instructs us that according to the Law, such as were set apart for the symbolical priesthood, or for earthly sovereignty, were anointed with the oil of Unction.⁴⁸” He says that the anointing of the priests in the Old Testament was only a symbolic action. So also the anointing of the kings was only to indicate the sovereignty over the earth.⁴⁹

3. Unction in the New Testament

a. The reason for the Unction: From the Old Testament, the author comes to the New Testament and says that every christian is to be anointed. The reason he gives is that as the priests and the kings were set apart for the symbolical priesthood and earthly sovereignty through anointing, we the christians who are set apart for the true priesthood and the kingdom of heaven, have greater reason to be anoi-

nted, and, therefore, “must be anointed with this same manifoldly symbolical Unction.⁵⁰ Similarly, taking the analogy of the artist with his anointed picture, which we referred to above, the author says that we who are, “drawn after the likeness of the heavenly king” must also be anointed.⁵¹

b. The purpose of the Unction with oil: Speaking about the real purpose of the anointing with the oil, the author says that we are anointed, “in order that they may be truly anointed ones and brethren of Christ⁵²” and “lest they should receive damage from the chaces of the world and from the opposition of the devil.⁵³”

c. The true anointing: While referring to the purpose of the anointing of the christian, Mar Abdiso claims that when a christian is anointed, he is anointed truly. This claim, as put forward by Abdiso, is thanks to the Anointed one, The Christ. Citing the psalm 45:7, the author says that Jesus Christ being one with God, was anointed truly and supernaturally.⁵⁴ Although the author has not put in words, he means to say that the one who is anointed in Christ, who is both God and Man, receives true anointing, through solidarity, in His human nature.

d. The Christ: the Anointer and the Anointed: Jesus is the God incarnate. And Mar Abdiso says that Jesus Christ is the Anointer and the Anointed. He

47. MAR O' DISHO, The Book of Marganitha on the Truth of Christianity, Ernakulam 1965, p. 54.

48. Ibid. p. 53.

49. I Sam 10:1; 16:13; 1 Kgs. 1: 39; 2kgs. 9:6 11:12.

50. MAR O' DISHO, The BOOK of Marganitha on the Truth of Christianity, Ernakulam, 1965, p. 53.

51. Ibid., p. 54.

52. Ibid., p. 53; Cf. also. Heb. 2:17.

53. Ibid., p. 54.

54. Ibid; p. 53; also Lk: 4:18-21; Is: 61:1-2; Heb. 1:9; phil. 2:6-11; Jn. 1:1-3

is the Anointer because he is with God or He is the second person of the Trinity. To put it in the words of the author, "He is the Anointer by His Godhead." Similarly, He is the Anointed, because He is the God made man or because He shares in the Humanity.⁵⁵

e. The Matter and the Form: Our author concludes his treatise on the oil of Unction, referring to the matter and the form of this sacrament. He says that the matter of the Oil of Unction is pure olive oil.⁵⁶ The form of the sacrament is the apostolic benediction.⁵⁷

An Appraisal

In the preceding pages we have been examining the vision of Mar Abdiso on the sacrament of Baptism and the Oil of Unction, as exposed in his book *Marganitha*, known as the Pearl. Before concluding this paper I would like to express my views on the subject matter of the vision of the author.

1. Throughout the discussion the author has proved himself to be faithful to the Sacred Scriptures. He shows the significance and the meaning of the baptism and the oil of unction almost always in comparison with similar actions or symbols or figures in the Scripture. The expositions of terms such as immersion, anointing, circumcision, adoption are familiar usages in the Scripture.

2. The author has very well succeeded in bringing out the superiority and the sublimity of the sacrament of Baptism and the oil of Unction. This he does mainly by means of the comparisons of the various forms of

baptism and unction. The comparison between the circumcision of the Hebrews and the Christian baptism is very significant. The author sees in the oil of unction the perfection of the O. T. anointing as well as the anointing in the natural life.

3. Another characteristic that has been noticed in the treatise under our consideration is that Mar Abdiso is very clearly basing his matter on the teaching of the Fathers of the Church. Having a glimpse at the teaching of the Fathers, I feel that the content of what Abdiso says is not always new, but he presents clearly and in a simple style what the Fathers of the Church have said in the early centuries with scriptural backing. And precisely this was the kind of work that was required of him by the patriarch. No one, I think, can deny the influence of the Fathers and early writings, especially the Syrian ones, as Ephraem, Aphrates, Theodore of Mopsuestia and others like Hippolytus, Justin, Tertullian, Chrisostheme, Didache, Liber Juliorum etc.

4. A forth characteristic is that in his explanations there are the use of many analogies. He projects the relation of the sacraments with phenomena in the natural life, and proceeds to the supernatural realities. While speaking about the sacraments the author says that the baptism is a birth. So also he considers the unction as a sacrament, a perfection, over the O. T. anointing by an artist.

5. As we know very well Mar Abdiso is an author of the 13th century which was the last phase of the glory of the East Syrian Church. He had been in close contact with

55. Ibid., p. 54. Cf. also ps. 45:7; Heb. 1:9; LK. 4:18-21; Phil. 2:6-11.

56. Ibid., p. 54.

57. Ibid., p. 54.

Horizontal Dimension of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana

Although the Qurbana is predominantly eschatologically oriented and heaven centred it neglects by no means to inculcate the due involvement of the faithful in the world and in the day-to-day life and to highlight the importance of the communitarian and the social elements in the Christian life. The attempt here is to examine how the Qurbana develops this theme.

§ 1. Communitarian celebration

Since liturgy is the public worship of the mystical body, head and members, it calls for the participation of all the individual members of it

in different ways according to their different ranks, offices and activity.¹ In it every one is related to the community and everything tends to its perfection.

Theologically speaking, the Eucharistic celebration is of a profoundly communitarian nature since all the members collaborate for its performance. An individual is minister only in so far as he is related to the community which confers a collective nature to his action. The Church is very conscious of the need of the active participation of the faithful,² cocelebrants with the ministerial priest, who takes the place of Christ, in every Eucharistic assembly. Then

the authors and the theologians of the West, specially the Scholastics. In the division of the matter and form of the sacraments the influence of the scholastic theology and St. Thomas Aquinas is evident. But he has not blindly followed them.

6. Finally to say the truth, the treatise of Mar Abdiso on the Sacrament of baptism and the oil of Unction

is a clear exposition of the Christian dogmas, where he stresses the importance of the metanoia in the celebration of the sacraments, because, for an outsider the various forms of immersion and anointing are the same. But for a christian these become meaningful and significant when he receives them with a circumcised heart and according the will of Christ, through the ministry of the Church.

Rev. Fr. Lonappan Arangassery

1. *CSL* 26.

2. *Id*, 14

priests, clergy and laity contribute their share to create a hierarchically structured unity of the Eucharistic assembly. Coming to the concrete, the number of the prayers to be recited by each section manifests the extent of the possibility of the active participation in the Qurbana: for the celebrant 75 prayers, servers 19 prayers, priest and the community together 3 prayers, community and the servers together 2 prayers and the community alone 42 prayers. Besides, there are 13 propers to be sung or recited by the choir and the community during the celebration.³ Without being satisfied that the celebrant addresses the congregation several times so as to evoke replies from them the Qurbana prescribes the participation of the deacon whose principal function is to strengthen the contact between the priest at the altar and the congregation. He acts as the leader who helps and guides them through appropriate advice and admonitions: "Let us pray," "praise the living God" etc. He announces the objects of the petitions as in *kározuzas* and prays with the people. Thus the active participa-

tion is included in the very nature of the Qurbana.

The same communitarian sense pervades in the formulas and prayers which are said in the first person plural, because it is the whole community that prays even when it prays for an individual person or for a private need. The prayer in the plural indicates that each participant is the part of the whole and that he should therefore shed his individualism. This does not mean that an individual Christian is dispensed from living a perfect Christian life, but should complement his activity in co-operation with others so as to form a single act of public worship.

§ 2. Concelebration

A more complete expression of the Qurbana as a unified action of the ecclesial community is the ancient custom whereby it was presided over by the bishop or by a priest appointed by him and participated by the priests, clerics and the people.⁴ It has obtained a new momentum and a theologico – liturgical definitiveness

3. *Ordo* 8–42.

4. G. BRIANCHANINOFF, *Concelebration of the Holy Eucharist in East and West*, in *ECQ* 10 (1953) 125–130, 196–203; P. TIHON, *De la Concelebration eucharistique*, in *NRT* 96 (1964) 24–47; C. BRAGA, *Commentarium in ritum concelebrationis*, in *EL* 79 (1965) 223–230; A. RAES, *La Concelebration eucharistique dans les rites orientaux*, in *LMD* 35 (1953) 24–47. There is not an uncommon opinion that the East Syrian Church had only ceremonial concelebration (Cf. J. M. HANSSENS, *Concelebratione ceremonialis in Periodica de re morali, canonica et liturgica* 16 (1927) 143–154, 181–210; 17 (1928) 93–127; 21 (1932) 193–219), especially because the assisting priests did not say the anaphora (Narsai 11–12, 27). Against this Botte argued that priests validly consecrated by extending their hands over the offering just as the bishops validly consecrated a new bishop by laying hands on him without personally saying the words which were said only by the main celebrant. He then concludes: "A merely ceremonial concelebration, devoid of sacramental validity is a myth which should be dispelled. It has no basis whatever in tradition." (B. BOTTE, *Note historique sur la concélébration dans l'Eglise ancienne*, in *LMD* 35 (1953) 9–23). But this argument is not cogent because there is no proof that the East Syrian priests intended to consecrate and extended their hands to manifest this intention. Another allusion to affirm that the president recites the anaphora while the other priests standing in

when the restored Qurbana introduced the sacramental concelebration with proper rituals and prescriptions. (1988 D. C. No. 33, 40, 63, 71, 72). If according to the ancient custom only the celebrant said the whole anaphora, the restored Qurbana allots a more active role to the concelebrants and thus among the prayers to be recited by the priests 23 are said by the main celebrant, 9 by the concelebrants and the rest are said by all the celebrants together.

It has been unanimously admitted that the practice of the concelebration has been a great contribution to the spirituality and the theological wealth of the Qurbana.⁵ It signifies the unity of the sacrifice of the Qurbana in so far as the multiplicity of Masses represent the only sacrifice on the cross

to which they owe the sacrificial character as the memorial of the bloody sacrifice of the cross. Secondly, it signifies the unity of the priesthood: the priests are only ministers of Christ, the High Priest who exercises His priesthood through them. Thirdly, the action of the entire people of God appears with greater clarity because it is the common action of the entire people of God organized and acting hierarchically.

§ 3. Sacrament of brotherly love

Every Eucharistic celebration presupposes a well constituted ecclesial community which is the embodiment of the universal Church, the Mystical Body of Christ. The "Mystical Body" which was originally applied to the Eucharistic body of Christ gradually

silence concelebrate⁷ is "the rite" of lavabo before the beginning of the anaphora of which G. Qatraya says: "Because they are about to enter the sanctuary to complete and perfect the office of the terrible Mysteries, the washing of their hands makes known well the washing of their hearts from envy and hatred according as our Lord said: 'When you stand to pray forgive what you have against any man (G. Qatraya 96).' Since the washing symbolizes only the purification from sin which is demanded from any participants for a worthy participation at the sacrifice, it needs not necessarily demonstrate the intention of the priest to consecrate the offering. But there are other casual references in the commentaries which seem to endorse the opinion that only one priest consecrated the Mysteries. G. Qatraya himself who made mention of the washing says that the celebrant alone stands in the place of Christ the High Priest. "The sanctifier (the celebrant) receives the holy things first, signifying that which Christ the High Priest has done in whose place the bishop stands." (*Id.* 97). Narsai says that the celebrant precedes the bishop in the Holy Communion because he has consecrated and that after him other priests and people communicated in due order (p. 27). According to Bar Zo 'bi the Mysteries are consecrated only by one priest whom he names the high priest whereas he calls other priests in the sanctuary angels." The fact that only one priest offers the sacrifice signifies that only the supreme Pontiff, our Lord Jesus Christ has been immolated for us. The priest and the deacons who remain in the sanctuary are the symbols of angels who attend the sacrifice of our redemption." (p. 406). These statements which clearly distinguish between the celebrant and other priests at the altar and regard only the former as the consecrator force us to opine that the East Syrian type of concelebration was ceremonial and not sacramental.

5. B. NEUNHEUSER, *Concelebrazione, dottrina e pastorale* (Brescia 1965) 37-197.

came to mean the union of all Christians, because this union is the effect produced by the Eucharist. The source of this ecclesial unity is Christ who comes to the faithful through the Eucharist. The symbol of charity and unity of the Mystical Body is exhibited in the community gathered around the altar with the minister.⁶

The Eucharistic participation strengthens the bond of the ecclesial community. Since all hear the same word of God in the liturgy, they can share the same vision of life. Since they profess the same heavenly Father, they should acknowledge their common sonship and common brotherhood with one another. All receive the same Eucharistic food, and therefore, they share numerically the same life.⁷ The rite of peace which is intended to establish and strengthen the bond of charity unites the participants to the community before being united sacramentally with God, and Christ unites them to Himself through the Eucharist. According to Narsai, this rite of peace symbolizes the concord between all the people on the day when the glorious bridegroom comes to judge all.⁸ Among the Orientals, every meal presupposes an intimate degree of fellowship, togetherness and brotherliness.⁹ Eucharist being a meal symbolizes that unity as Vat. II emphasizes:¹⁰ "In the sacrament of the Eucharistic bread, unity of all believers who form one body in Christ is both expressed and brought about."¹⁰

Every common celebration is the sign of a communitarian hope that

leads the faithful to a common commitment. What is expected is not a merely external communitarian celebration but a celebration with internal commitment, and therefore, a celebration becomes fruitful only if the participants become the sign of hope in a firm commitment to unity and solidarity. As is shown below, this solidarity is well expressed in the Qurbana. The object of many prayers is the prosperity of the Church. Thus the priest prays after the *karoza*: "Lord God, stretch forth your right hand of mercy on your Catholic and Apostolic Church which extends from one end of the earth to the other. Preserve her from all harm seen and unseen"¹¹

The congregation often recites prayer for the ecclesiastical authority¹² and especially for the celebrant priest who being conscious of his unworthiness seeks their prayers as the following citation testifies:

Priest: My brethren, pray for me that this sacrifice may be perfected through my hands.

People: May Christ hear your prayer; may Christ accept your offering; may Christ glorify your priesthood in His kingdom.¹³

The proclamation of the deacon serves as a typical example for the great concern of the Eucharistic assembly for the whole Church and for her individual members whether living or dead:

6. LG 26.

7. J. M. R. TILIARD; *L' Eucharistia, Pasqua della chiesa* 265.

8. Narsai 9.

9. J. JEREMIAS, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* 204.

10. LG 3. 7.

11: *Taksa* 60, 17. Cf also *Id.* 39.

12. *Id.* 13.

13. *Id.* 29-30.

Let us pray for our fathers, the patriarchs and bishops, priests and deacons, young men and virgins, our parents, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, all the faithful rulers that love Christ, and for all who have departed from this world in true faith. Let us remember all prophets and Apostles, martyrs and confessors of this place and of every place.¹⁴

The commentary of G. Qatraya on this prayer illustrates the great concern of the Church over every member of the community.¹⁵ The *karo-zuzas* are prayers for the Church and for the general intentions of the participants. The great intercession after the anamnesis deserves a special mention because it constitutes a good testimony to the solidarity of the Eucharistic community.¹⁶

In the mission of the Church to transform this world according to the vision and love of Christ, the Eucharist plays a pivotal role, because the Christians derive their faith from it in order to transmit it to others. Through the same action of the Eucharist they share in Christ's love for man and convey it to others as a redeeming force. This love for mankind, radiating from the Church is reflected in the prayers of the Qurbana in various ways as the following example testifies:

For the peace, concord and welfare of the whole world and of all the Churches, we beseech you. For our country and for all the countries, and for all the faithful every-where we beseech you. For favourable seasons, plen-

tiful harvest and the prosperity of the whole world we beseech you.¹⁷

Several prayers reflect the great concern of the Church for peace in the world. For example, the prayer after the epiclesis reads: "Establish your peace and tranquillity in the four corners of the world and especially in the holy Catholic Church. May there be peace between the Church and State."¹⁸ The final huthama summarizes the whole attitude of the brotherly love and concern for the world: "May his grace and mercy be showered upon us and upon the whole world, upon the Church and her children, now and always and for ever and ever."¹⁹

If the Eucharist is the continuation of Christ's redeeming love, it involves also the opposition to all kinds of evils which oppress men of our day. In the public ministry Christ attacked evil, taught against error, dishonesty, prejudice and hypocrisy of men and spoke against the social injustices of his time. The implementation of the Eucharistic activity of Christ should also imply the continuation of the same opposition to evil and demand the self-dedication of the Church to the work of effective charity.²⁰

Now to summarize what has been treated in the preceding pages concerning the theology of the Eucharistic assembly, the Qurbana is very predominantly eschatological in character as Dix says:

Addai and Mari is a Eucharistic prayer which is concentrated solely upon the experience of the

14. *Id.* 22.

15. The detailed commentary of Qatraya reveals the great concern of the Eucharistic assembly for all the members of the Church. Cf. p. 97

16. *Taksa* 60, 32-35; Narsai 18-19.

17. *Taksa* 60, 13.

18. *Taksa* 60, 35. Cf. also P. 14.

19. *Id.* 53. 30.

20. B. J. COOKE, *Christian Sacraments and Christian Personality* (New York 1965) 252-262.

Eucharist to the momentary ignoring of all other elements in Christian belief and thought. Maranatha "Our Lord, come" the ecstatic cry of the first pre-Pauline Aramaic-speaking disciples, is the summary of what it has to say.²¹

This observation is most realistic because the prayers expressing the horizontal aspects of the Qurbana are mainly of later origin.

The traditional themes of eschatology which enumerate death, judgement, heaven and hell as the ends of individuals and the last day, the resurrection, final judgement and the end of the world as the last things of mankind generally neglect the major items in the eschatology, namely, Christ and Church which have become the most important themes of eschatology in the Qurbana. Christ is the new Adam because He is the new man,²² and the Church is the eschatological community since she is the last in which God acts once and for all. The time of salvation has been inaugurated in her, the final consummation of which will be realized only in the future.

The Church is already under the reign of God. She is divine bride whom Christ sanctifies and beautifies through His divine means²³ and through the process of history. Christ and the Holy Spirit dwell in her and guide her to the eternal bridal chamber.

The liturgical community, assembled in hierarchical order in the name of Christ is the Church in concrete, which being at the same time the epiphany of the universal Church, has the same dimensions as those of the latter. It is the Eucharistic community which is the embodiment of

the universal Church rather than the individual that is depicted as moving towards its eschatological glory which is not a detached reality to be arrived at on an uncertain date in the future but as even today partially realized and operative; the earthly Eucharistic assembly to which heavenly beings join together prefigures that one celestial Church after the parousia.

The time of the Church is the time of vigilance and hope: vigilance towards the present opportunities and the good use of them, and hope for the future. Faith puts the faithful already in the foretaste of the eternal joy. Charity unites them with Christ through the service of others. In the Eucharistic koinonia, they enjoy that union with Christ which will be their privilege in the eternal abode in an eminent way.

When the Christians gather together for the celebration of the Eucharist, they form a community which shares in Christ's redemption. It is not a perfect community, since its members still harbour hatred, jealousy and prejudices which harm the peace and unity of the Church. Since its members are sinful men, it has to undergo the process of purification and sanctification before being received into the heavenly bridal chamber as the bride adorned for her divine bridegroom.

This tension towards the future does not imply a despising of or flight from the world but demands the right involvement and use of it so as to make it serve as the means for the achievement of the final goal. Since the postparousiac life is the continuation of the present life, the sanctification of and the concern for this life and the world is greatly imperative for the Christian life.

Dr. Thomas Mannooramparampil

21. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* 186.

22. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH, *Ephes.* 20, 1 = PG 5. 661-662; G. FLOROVSKY, *Eschatology in the Patristic Age. An Introduction*, in SP 2 (1957) = TU XI 235-245.

23. *Taksa* 68, 99, 112; Bedjan III 391. 398. 403 passim.

He Descended to the Dead

The Saturday of Good Tidings

Holy Saturday, in western churches, tends to be a day of quiet between two very busy days. No particular provision was made for it in the Church of England's *Lent – Holy Week – Easter*, save to instruct priests not to celebrate communion. Likewise the Roman Order states "the church waits at the Lord's tomb, meditating on his suffering and death. The altar is laid bare and the sacrifice of the Mass is not celebrated."¹ The homily in the Office of readings does point in a different direction, to that of Christ's descent to the dead but this theme does not dominate the day. The West Syrian tradition is very different. Although this is the last day of the great fast, it is one of joy. Alone of traditions this one celebrates Christ's descent into Sheol. Hence the name the Saturday of Good Tidings. The day when Christ went and preached to the dead.

Western churches say in the Apostles Creed 'he descended to the dead'. However, there is no clear exposition of this in contemporary liturgy and hymns. Indeed there may be some considerable embarrassment about the idea of 'the Harrowing of Hell'. 'The suggestion ... that the

descent gave the opportunity for those who died before Christ to hear the gospel is rather too mythological for modern minds'². This mythology is however very positively developed by west Syrians. The day becomes one of joy in which it is appropriate to celebrate the Qurbana (the eucharist)³. It is the day of the announcement of the resurrection by Jesus to the dead. Using the English translation (and at some points adaptation) of the *Penqitho* (the Office for Holy Days) of Kurisumala Ashram, I propose to look at the interpretation of the descent of Jesus to Sheol in this tradition. Firstly we look at the burial of Jesus. Then using the Syrian hermeneutic of prefigurement and fulfilment, we will look at those prophecies identified as pointing to the descent into Sheol. Finally their fulfilment will be examined through the *dramatis personae* involved. By examining the liturgy of this day we are lead into a rich mythology that feeds Christian hope.

The burial of Jesus

The readings of the day are naturally those of the burial of Jesus (Lk 23: 50–56). These are expounded in the accompanying hymns.

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1. Greenacre R. and Haselock J., *The Sacrament of Easter*, Gracewing (Leominster, 1989), p. 124
 2. Hanson A. T., 'Descent into Hell, The,' *A Dictionary of Christian Theology*, SCM, (London, 1969), p. 94
 3. Francis Acharya, *Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit Vol III*, Kurisumala Ashram, (Vagamon Kerala, 1985), p. xxxiii.

A man called Joseph, from Aramathea, presented himself before Pilate, in tears and asked him, "Judge of the people,

grant me to take the body which is hanging on the cross"⁴.

This is seen as an act of faith by Joseph that will bring blessing:

Blessed are you who confessed Him, halleluia, He will confess you.⁵

Nicodemus is also mentioned:

After taking down the Son of God from the Cross, Nicodemus

prepared for His burial: myrrh and aloes and linen cloths

a new tomb and incense and spices...⁶

Also Mary is beautifully pictured singing a lament at the crucifixion:

Your tomb resembles Paradise and You, my Son,

are like the Bridegroom and the dead like the wedding guests.⁷

Other witnesses are called to these events including the Earth and the Fiery Ones (angels). The Temple is seen to mourn because 'the Holy Spirit is leaving you' and the dead are called to 'go forth to meet my Only Son'⁸. All this naturally leads to the church being seen as involved in the burial:

The Church received him and kissed his wounds...⁹

So far the hymns only elaborate the death of Christ but the response to the special psalm of Evening prayer (said the night before, as in the Jewish - Biblical method of Determining the day beginning with sunset) creates the tone of the whole day:

You who brought the Good Tidings of life and resurrection to those who were in Sheol, be gracious to all, O God.¹⁰

How does the office develop the event of the burial of Jesus into the descent of Jesus into Sheol?

The event foreshadowed

It may come as a surprise to find that I Peter 3: 17-22 is not read until the Morning Service of the day; Morning Prayer being the forth office of the day. There is no apologetic for the interpretation of the burial by bringing this passage to the fore. Rather the descent to Sheol is seen as fulfilling the 'mysteries prefigured by the prophets'.¹¹ Not feeling the contemporary western embarrassment about typology a number of events in the Old Testament are seen as pointing to the descent to Sheol. The readings for Evening Prayer are of Joseph in the pit (Gen 37:29-35), Jeremiah in the well (38:5-7) and Daniel in the lion's den (6:15-17). This may seem fanciful, but the approach is that of seeing shadows in the Old Testament in light of New Testament events. They anticipate the

4. *ibid.*, p 568

5. *ibid.*, p 568

6. *ibid.*, p 568

7. *ibid.*, p 571

8. *ibid.*, p 572

9. *ibid.*, p 568

10. *ibid.*, p 566

11. *ibid.*, p 569 see also p 599 and p 604

event to the eye of faith. Likewise Jonah is seen as prefiguring Christ in the tomb:

For three days you remained in sheol as Jonah prefigured you by remaining three days in the belly of the fish.¹²

This approach, of course was used by Jesus himself.

For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Mt 12:40.

But there are two further prefigurements that are of particular interest. The first comes from the prophecy of Jacob in Gen 49:9.

You are a lion's cub, O Judah;

you return from the prey, my son.
Like a lion he crouches and lies down,

like a lioness—who dares to rouse him.

This may not seem to be very relevant at first, but this prophecy caused considerable excitement in the Syrian tradition.¹³ The tethering of the donkey to the vine (Gen 49:11) in the office of the week before has already been seen as prefiguring the triumphal entry,¹⁴ now the lion cub is a type of the descent. It would be possible to miss this allusion except for the fact that it is in the opening prayer of the day:

Lion cub who went to be shut with the sheep who had gone astray,

whom death had caused to fall the darkness,

and who made them come forth out of the darkness into the light.¹⁵

This seeming obscurity is expanded later:

Jacob the just prophesied about you, the lion cub who stooped down and couched as a mighty one, and came up from the kill.¹⁶

Also in the supplication song of White (Easter) Monday:

Jacob in the dust saw Him and trembling with joy cried out:

"My son, the lion cub, you climb back from the kill!"¹⁷

This hints at the type of interpretation put on to this verse. It is not only a prophecy of the descent into Sheol but also of the victory of Christ there. Hence the position of west Syrians that it is a prophetic prefigurement.

The second Old Testament prefigurement of particular interest comes from the Judges. The riddle of Samson which came from the observation of the honey in the dead lion is seen typologically.

Samson prefigured you by the sweet food which came out of the devourer, bitter death.¹⁸

12. *ibid.*, p 599

13. Murray R. *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, CUP, (Cambridge, 1975), p 96-104

14. *Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit Vol III*, op. cit., p 362

15. *ibid.*, p 565

16. *ibid.*, p 599

17. *Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit Vol IV*, CMS Press, (Kottayam, 1986), p 20

18. *Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit Vol III*, op cit., p 599

This begins to point to some of the effects of Christ's sojourn in Sheol. A verse of one of the hymns of the sixth hour says:

Out of the Devourer came that
which had been devoured,

without corruption, the sweet came
out of the bitter, as it is written.
He illustrated the riddle of Samson
the Hebrew.

Death is bitter but Christ is sweet
for those who love Him.¹⁹

As from the dead lion came forth the sweet honey, so from the death of Christ comes freedom to those in Sheol. So now we can go on to look at the fulfilment of these prophetic mysteries by looking at the various 'dramatis personae' in the prayers and hymns of the office.

Prophecy Fulfilled

The genre chosen to talk of the work of Christ on this day is poetry and prayer. Thus there is not a doctrinal discussion but a celebration of the event. Therefore, to interpret the way fulfilment of the prophecy is perceived, let us look at four characters in the story, Sheol, Death, Adam and Christ.

It might seem strange to have Sheol (and Death) as *dramatis personae* alongside Adam and Christ, but the prayers constantly personalise them. Sheol is said to be:

embittered by your coming when
he received you as dead.²⁰

As well as being personified, Sheol is also seen as a cave²¹, an abyss²², and a walled city²³. By Christ's descent into Sheol the walls are broken and the dead rejoice. Notice that it is to Sheol that Christ goes. Older versions of the Apostle's Creed in English say that Christ 'descended into Hell'. This can be confusing statement. It seems to mean to some that Christ experiences the type of suffering of those under the unending wrath of God. Calvin in particular takes this line. He rejects the idea of Christ descent into Sheol to preach to the old covenant just as a 'fable'. He rejected the proposed biblical basis for the doctrine and refused to follow the 'great authors' who had expounded it.²⁴ Meanwhile his own reinterpretation is based upon the cry of desolation. To him this means that 'he bore the weight of the divine anger, that, smitten and afflicted, he experienced all the signs of an angry and avenging God... Thus by engaging with... the pains of hell, he gained the victory'.²⁵ This dogma has an even slimmer biblical basis than the one that Calvin has rejected. It entails greater difficulties than the interpretation he has scorned. The Syrian tradition does not go this far. Christ descend into Sheol, the Old Testament resting place of the dead; a strange shadowy world. He goes there to rescue the just of the Old Testament, not to taste the pains of hell in our place.

19. *ibid.*, p 608

20. *ibid.*, p 599

21. *ibid.*, p 608

22. *ibid.*, p 580

23. *ibid.*, p 569

24. Calvin *Institutes*, 2:16:9

25. *ibid.*, 2:16:11

As in Paul (cf Rom 5:14), death is talked of as a power that rules.²⁶ Personified Death is 'terror-stricken' at Christ's entry into Sheol.²⁷ Christ,

rested in Sheol like a lion,

and death and Satan trembled at
his voice.²⁸

The result is that;

You slew Death and took away
her treasures.²⁹

Indeed the whole episode can be summed up in this refrain,

You tasted death to put Death
to death by your death.³⁰

There is a strong theme in the Syrian tradition of personifying Death and Satan in dialogue poems. St Ephrem wrote a number of such *sogiatha*, a literary type that goes back beyond the advent of Christianity in the region.³¹ Death is forced to give up the dead by the descent of Christ into Sheol. Indeed death is destroyed by Christ's death and so life and resurrection come to light.

The first recipients of these glad tidings are our ancestor Adam.

Our Lord saw Adam laid low and decaying into dust and showed him His graciousness, "Rise and take courage...

I descended into the tomb
to give you the life which you
had lost.³²

Eve also hear the message.

On this night our mother Eve
heard His voice and said,

"Praise to the Good One who
suffered death for our salvation"³³

Indeed the preaching is to all the just
of Old Testament times. Jesus

entered like a pilgrim

to spend the night in Sheol but
He awoke

those who were lying motionless
in this place.³⁴

A whole range of Old Testament characters are seen to be set free, Seth, Noah, Moses, the prophets Aaron, Levi, Abel, Melchizedek. The effect is that:

Adam who was lying there awoke
with his children

And they sang hymns of praise
to You.³⁵

Indeed,

He took Adam out of the gulf of
perdition

and made him ascend with Him-
self to Him who sent Him.³⁶

26. *Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit Vol III*, op cit., p 568

27. *ibid.*, p 576

28. *ibid.*, p 578

29. *ibid.*, p 601

30. *ibid.*, p 569

31. see Brock, S. *Sogiatha Syriac Dialogue Hymns*, Syrian Churches Series Vol XI, St Joseph's Press, (Kottayam, 1987), p 3, And Brock, S. *The Harp of the Spirit*, Studies Supplementary to Sobornost no. 4, Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, (1983), p 70-72.

32. *Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit Vol III*, op. cit., p 569

33. *ibid.*, p 578

34. *ibid.*, p 586

35. *ibid.*, p 595

36. *ibid.*, p 591

This prefigures the resurrection of the church on the last day.³⁷ It is because of the preaching of the glad tidings to the just, that this day in Holy Week has a remembrance of the saints. Of all the weeks of the year, Holy Week is the only one that omits references to the saints. This day is the one exception to that rule.

It is good to honour the bones of the saints whom Christ loved, as the bones of the glorious Joseph were given honour by Moses.

At the time of trembling may they be intercessors for us before God.³⁸

Not all of our modern questions are answered by the hymns and prayers of this day, not least questions about those who died never to hear the gospel. But the emphasis is on the preaching to the just of old and their joyful response to the message, and this in itself points to great possibilities.

The three personae above have enabled us to look at the work of Christ in Sheol, but what is this Christ like? The Immortal One who comes and enters Sheol is pictured in a variety of ways.³⁹ We have already seen the use of the metaphor 'lion cub', now we turn to look at a small selection of other images.

Blessed is the Rain of Life which
descended and sprinkles

the resurrection on those who
were laid to rest in Sheol.⁴⁰

A metaphor which would speak clearly to those who live in countries containing deserts. Also:

today a great light shines in Sheol
which had never seen the light,

for the Light entered and enlightened
all its inhabitants.⁴¹

This perhaps has a mere universal appeal.

Christ's entry was unforeseen by the powers of Death and Sheol, thus Jesus was:

like a spy

[who] descended into Sheol and
put on the garment of that place
and lay down with death in utter
abjection.⁴²

But of course death did not have the final say and the spy was revealed to be Son of God and resurrected with glory. Christ's action is even seen in terms of diving.

You dived and lay down in the
great cavern of Sheol.

You drew Adam out, whom it
held in the mouth, a deadly stranglehold.

You sought him, a pearl buried
in the filth of the dead,

who had fallen away from You.

You carried him
and made him ascend to the
Father.⁴³

37. *ibid.*, p 591

38. *ibid.*, p 590

39. for a discussion on the importance of the variety of metaphor in prayer see, Tovey, P. *Praying to God as Mother*, Grove Spirituality Study no 38, Grove Books, (Bramcote, 1991)

40. *ibid.*, p 570

41. *ibid.*, p 570

42. *ibid.*, p 585

43. *ibid.*, p 608

This image of the pearl diver, is a particular piece of local theology, was developed in a variety of ways in Syrian poetry.⁴⁴ Thus the day is one of praise to Christ:

Blessed are You, Living One, who
descended into Sheol.

Blessed are You, Holy One, who
did not suffer corruption.⁴⁵

Christ the Key

The anamnesis of the anaphora of St. James, the eucharistic liturgy of the West Syrian Church, proclaims:

commemorating thy death and
burial, O Lord, and thy resurrection
in three days...⁴⁶

Reference to the burial of Christ is common in eastern anamnesis and this can be seen as based on a developed theology expressed in the Day of Good Tidings. The West Syrian tradition in its calendar bears witness to an alternative approach to Holy Saturday. In the west there has been a long history of the rejection of the doctrine of Christ's preaching to the dead. Calvin saw it as a fable and Hanson as a myth. But today the value of myth is being reassessed. Perhaps therefore this particular strand of the Christian tradition has something to say to us western Christians.

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44. see also Brock, S P *Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, Syrian Churches Series vol 9, Anita Printers, (Poona, 1979), p 102-103

45. *ibid.*, p 580

46. Howard, G B *The Christians of St Thomas and their Liturgies*, John Henry and James Parker, (London, 1864), p 228

The Obligations of all Christian Faithful Regarding the Preservation of the Patrimony of their Church

In the Oriental Code an autonomous Church (*Ecclesia sui iuris*) is defined as a group of christian faithful bound together by a hierarchy, according to the norm of law, which is expressly or tacitly acknowledged as autonomous by the supreme authority

of the Church.¹ The patrimony or rite of a *sui iuris* Church includes mainly its liturgy, theology, spirituality and discipline.² Though there are many common elements in the liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony of the five original

1. CCEO (Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium) c. 27. For a clear idea of *Ecclesia sui iuris* see I. Zuzek, "Che cosa è una Chiesa, un Rito Orientale" *Seminarium* XV (April-June 1975) 263-277; "Le Ecclesiae sui iuris nella revisione del Diritto Canonico, in LATOURELLE L. *Vaticano II: bilancio e prospettive venticinque anni dopo* (1972-1987), Assisi 1987, 869-882; D. Salachas, "II concetto ecclesiologico e canonico di" "Chiesa Orientali" (*Ecclesia sui iuris*)" *Oriente Cristiano* 30 (1990) 45-53.
2. CCEO c. 28. Ritus est patrimonium liturgicum, theologicum, spirituale et disciplinare cultura ac rerum adiunctis historiae populorum distinctum, quod modo fidei vivendae uniuscuiusque Ecclesiae sui iuris proprio exprimitur.

The new Code makes a clear distinction between Church and rite. Church is a community of persons bound together by a hierarchy and rite is something that belongs to it, constituting its property or patrimony. Naturally the enrolment or ascription is not in a rite but in a Church. By belonging to a Church the person possesses also the rite through which that Church lives the faith. This distinction between the Church and rite shall not be stressed too much to equate the Church with hierarchy. What gives a Church its distinctive identity and individuality is its rite, ie. its specific liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony. No Church can exist, separated from this patrimony. So the distinction between Church and rite is only conceptual, not existential. For the historical development of canons 27 § 28 see *Nuntia* 3 (1976) 44-52; *Nuntia* 19 (1984) 5-6, 21-23; *Nuntia* 22 (1986) 22-37; *Nuntia* 24-25 (1987) 5; *Nuntia* 26 (1988) 110-111; *Nuntia* 28 (1989) 18-19. (*Nuntia* is the official organ of the Pontifical Commission for the Revision of Oriental Canon Law. In 31 volumes, the Commission reported the progress of its work on codification till the publication of the Oriental Code).

traditions³, there are also differences among these five and among the different autonomous churches⁴, which concretise these traditions in their *Sitz im Leben*. These differences are mainly due to their differences in the apostolic Christ experience⁵ and due to their deep insertion into the socio-cultural-philosophical milieu of each nation.

The preservation and protection of her patrimony is of vital importance for the specific existence of each oriental Church. The Second Vatican Council praises and values highly the rites of eastern churches which have their origin in the apostolic tradition and desires that they are to be religiously preserved and promoted as the undivided patrimony of Universal Church.⁶ The patrimony of the Universal Church is totality or communion of the patrimonies of all the Churches—the Latin Church and different oriental Churches which belong to any

one of the five original traditions. It is only by being ascribed or enrolled in any one of the 22 churches of the Catholic communion that a person can become a member of the Universal Church and it is only by loving and protecting one's own Church and its patrimony that one can protect and develop the Universal Church. The diminution of the patrimony of any of these churches is tantamount to the diminution of the patrimony of the Universal Church. Therefore the Supreme Authority of the Universal Church has laid down certain norms for the protection and rejuvenation of her patrimony. The Code of Canons of the Oriental Churches canonized the various norms and principles laid down by *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*. This study is an attempt to highlight the obligations of all christian faithful regarding the preservation of the ritual patrimony of their Church.

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3. CCEO c. 28 § 2. The rites or traditions are originally five viz, Alexandrian, Antiochene, Armenian, Chaldean and Constantinopolitan. Every oriental Church concretises any one of these five traditions or rites in its own life situation, culture, and historical circumstances. Thus the Armenian Rite is concretised in the Armenian patriarchal Church; the two autonomous Churches—the Coptic Church and the Ethiopian Church concretise in their own life situation the Alexandrian rite; The Maronite, Syrian and Malankara Churches belong to the Antiochene Rite; the Chaldean and Syro-Malabar Churches have the common Chaldean Rite and about thirteen autonomous churches have the Byzantine Rite.
 4. The Catholic Church is a communion of 22 Churches—the Latin Church and 21 oriental Churches.
 5. All the Churches and their rites have their origin either directly or indirectly from the Christ experience of apostles. Some of them are directly originated from the apostles themselves and others from the evangelization process of those churches which possesses this apostolic tradition. Cf. *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* 1; *Unitatis Redintegratio* 14, 17; *Dei Verbum* 7-9; *Lumen Gentium* 23.
 6. *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* 1, 2, 5; Cf. CCEO c. 39; Cf. also P.A. O' Connel, *Vatican II: The Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches*, Dublin 1965, 21-22; G. Distanto & S. Manna, *Decreto sulle chiese orientali cattoliche Orientalium Ecclesiarum* Piemme 1986, 24-25; R. F. Esposito, *Il decreto conciliare sulle chiese orientali "Orientalium Ecclesiarum": testo e commento*, Roma 1966, 116-120.

1. Obligations of Hierarchs in General

According to the Code the hierarchs who preside over autonomous Churches and all other hierarchs shall see most carefully to the faithful custody and accurate observance of their own rite. They shall not accept changes in it except by reason of organic progress, yet keeping in mind mutual good will and christian unity'. The hierarchs who preside over autonomous Churches can be patriarch in a patriarchal Church (c.55), the major archbishop in a major archiepiscopal Church (c.151), the metropolitan in metropolitan Church (c.155) and the heads of other *sui iuris* Churches (c.174). Other hierarchs are the metropolitans of the patriarchal and major archiepiscopal Churches (cc.-133-139), the eparchial bishops as well as those who for a time succeed these in government in accordance with law (c.984 § 1). Besides these come the exarch, apostolic administrator, protocyncellus, cyncellus and major superiors of religious institutes of consecrated life who have ordinary power of governance (c.984).

All these hierarchs have great obligation to preserve and accurately observe their own rite according to the canon. The only way of change in the rite of a Church is its spontaneous and organic growth towards perfection. This is the verbatim repetition of *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, "changes are to be introduced only to

forward their own organic development". The rite must grow like a living organism spontaneously assimilating new elements and discarding outmoded forms and items, which are not essential. Just as the growth of an organism is not its change, mutilation, or juxtaposition of foreign elements, but an unfolding of its innate vigour to assimilate outside elements eschewing all foreign or dead matter, so also rite in its further growth has to preserve its individuality and to have to assimilate to it appropriate new elements.⁸ This principle opposes to the blind imitation of the Latin Rite especially when the reason for the introduction of the Latin Rite custom is due to a feeling of inferiority on the part of eastern Catholics⁹. Because of the high technological, scientific and financial advancement of the western countries, the people of other countries developed a slavery consciousness and psychological subjection to the west which prompt them to depend on the west and to adapt to the western practices without discretion even in the ecclesiastical level. The duty of the hierarchs is to allow the spontaneous growth keeping in mind "mutual good will and christian unity".

2. Obligations of Patriarch

Besides the obligations common to all the hierarchs, the patriarch as the father and head of his *sui iuris* Church has special right and duty to preserve and safeguard the patrimony of his

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7. CCEO c. 40. Cf. Pius XII "Cleri Sanctitati" (CS) AAS 49 (1957) 433-603, c. 1 § 2; *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* 6; *Nuntia* 3 (1976) 48.
 8. Cf. P. J. Podipara, *Reflections on Liturgy*, Kottayam 1983, 27; C. Pujol, *Decretum Concilii Valicani 11, "Orientalium Ecclesiarum": :Textus et Commentarium*, Rome 1970, 65; G. D. Gallaro, "Orientalium Ecclesiarum Deserves More Attention", *Nicolaus* 2 (1986) 299.
 9. V. J. Pospishil, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum: The Decree on the Eastern Catholic Churches of the II Vatican Council. Canonical Pastoral Commentary*, New York 1965, 22. For example the whole Holy Qurbana facing the people, the transmission of fruits and other materials to the altar during the preparatory rite etc are blind imitations, against the common oriental tradition.

Church and to strive for its organic development. It is the duty of the patriarch to establish the liturgical commission and other commissions for his autonomous Church (c. 124). The patriarch can introduce prayers and pious exercises in the entire Church, provided that they are consonant with his own rite (c. 96). He can approve the liturgical books, after a previous revision by the Apostolic See with the consent of the Synod of Bishops. He is also competent to approve the translations of liturgical books, but he cannot make changes in it except by reason of its organic progress (c. 657).

Even though the patriarchal jurisdiction is limited within the frontiers of the territory of the Church over which he presides, he has some powers even outside the territory as regards the patrimony. It is the right and obligation of the patriarch to seek appropriate information concerning the christian faithful who reside outside the territory of the Church even through a visitor, sent by himself with the consent of the Apostolic See. The patriarch after discussing the report of the visitor in the Synod of Bishops can propose opportune means to the Apostolic See, in order that everywhere in the world protection and promotion of the spiritual good of the christian faithful over which he presides can be provided, even through the establishment of their own parishes, and eparchies¹⁰. Similarly liturgical laws enacted by the Synod of Bishops and promulgated by the patriarch have the

force of law everywhere in the world¹¹. All these provisions are intended for the preservation and accurate observance of rite.

3. Obligations of Eparchial Bishops

The eparchial bishop is the moderator, promoter, and guardian of the entire liturgical life in the eparchy committed to him. He has grave obligation to see that the liturgical life is fostered in his eparchy as much as possible and ordered according to the prescriptions and approved customs of his own autonomous Church.¹² Nobody has the right to criticise or hinder him from celebrating the liturgy in the ideal form according to the prescriptions of the liturgical books and according to the proper traditions of his own autonomous Church. The eparchial bishop has also to see that in his cathedral and parishes the divine services are celebrated solemnly as far as possible, especially on Sundays, feast days, and solemnities and he himself takes part in it (c. 199 § 1, 2). He has also the obligation of vigilance lest abuses creep into ecclesiastical discipline, celebration of sacraments and sacramentals, the worship of God and devotion to the saints (c. 201 § 1, 2). As regards the entire liturgical life of the eparchy and the proper administration of the sacraments accounting to the prescription and tradition of his own autonomous Church the eparchial bishop is the moderator and guardian.¹³

10. CCEO c. 148 § 1, 2, 3; Cf. I Zuzek, "Canons Concerning the Authority of Patriarchs over the Faithful of Their Own Rite Who Live Outside the Limits of Patriarchal Territory" *Nuntia* 6 (1978) 3-33; G. Rezác, "The Extension of the Power of the Patriarchs and of the Eastern Churches in General Over the Faithful of their Own Church" *Concilium* 8 (1969) 59-65; See also *Nuntia* 22 (1986) 108; *Nuntia* 28 (1989) 42-43; *Nuntia* 30 (1990) 55-63.

11. CCEO c. 150 § 2; Cf. *Nuntia* 22 (1986) 110-111.

12. CCEO c. 199 § 1; *Christus Dominus* 15; Cf. *Nuntia* 23 (1986) 22.

13. Cf. CCEO cc. 197; 198; 670 § 1, 2; 693; 703 § 1, 2; 708; 714; 717; 720 § 3; 722 § 2, 4; 724 § 1; 728 § 2; 744-753; 784; 789; 795-797; 816 etc.

All the religious – papal right, patriarchal right or eparchial right – are subject to the authority of the eparchial bishop in matters of the public exercise of divine worship, preaching of the word of God to the people, catechetical instruction and liturgical formation. The eparchial bishop has the right and duty to visit each single monastery and house of religious institutes in his territory during the pastoral visitation or at any time for matters concerned with the liturgical worship and for other things mentioned above.¹⁴

4. Obligations of protopresbytors Presbytors and Rectors

The protopresbytor is a presbytor who is placed over a district consisting of several parishes so that in the name of eparchial bishop and in the same district, he may carry out the functions defined by law.¹⁵ Besides the obligations of a pastor with regard to his parish, protopresbytor has to coordinate and promote common pastoral action and to work for the good of the clergy, christian faithful and the overall development of the region. One of the most important obligation of protopresbytor is to see that the divine liturgy and the divine services are celebrated according to the prescriptions of the liturgical books, that the good appearance and condition of the churches and sacred furnishings are carefully maintained especially in the celebration of the

divine liturgy and custody of the Divine Eucharist (c. 278 § 1 n. 3).

A pastor who is endowed with the triple functions of teaching, sanctifying, and governing, is responsible for the liturgical life and catechetical formation in the parish. He has to see that the celebration of the divine liturgy is the centre and culmination of the whole life of the christian community and he shall promote the frequent reception of sacraments by the christian faithful and their active participation in the divine services.¹⁶ The rector who is entrusted with some Church which is not parochial also has the same obligations as regards the liturgical life. The rector who is under the authority of the local hierarchy, has to see that the divine liturgy, sacraments and divine services are celebrated in the church according to the prescriptions of the liturgical books and law (c. 309).

5. Obligations of All Other Clerics and Members of Institutes of Consecrated Life

According to *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* "all clerics and those who are to receive sacred orders should be well instructed concerning rites and particularly in practical rules for inter-ritual questions" (OE 4). Clerics are those who are chosen by competent ecclesiastical authority and received any grade of sacred ordination (Cf. cc. 323–327). They can be bishops, priests, deacons and other minor clerics if an

14. Cf. CCEO c. 415 § 1 & 2; *Christus Dominus* 35; *Nuntia* 8 (1979) 35–38; *Nuntia* 16 (1983) 16. The Catholic Church expects that every bishop as the moderator of divine worship celebrates the Liturgy according to the prescriptions of the official liturgical books and the proper tradition and spirit of his own autonomous Church, and guards against abuses. If any bishop does the contrary, in the opinion of this author, the priests and religious are not obliged to do the same.
15. CCEO c. 276 § 1; *Christus Dominus* 29; A Synal, "De protopresbyteris" *Nuntia* 9 (1979) 85–89; *Nuntia* 19 (1984) 18; *Nuntia* 23 (1986) 73–76.
16. CCEO c. 289; *Christus Dominus* 30; Cf. *Nuntia* 9 (1979) 71–72; *Nuntia* 23 (1986) 85–86.

Ecclesia sui iuris has these (c. 327). Members of the institutes of consecrated life include monks, members of orders, congregations, societies of common life in the manner of religious life and secular institutes. According to the code all these have grave obligation to observe their own rite and to acquire daily a greater understanding and more perfect practice of it.¹⁷ All the ministers are obliged to celebrate divine eucharist and the sacraments faithfully observing the prescriptions of the liturgical books of their own autonomous Church.¹⁸

6. The Rights and Obligations of Other Christian Faithful

The christian faithful have the fundamental right to worship God according to the prescriptions of their own autonomous Church and to follow their own form of spiritual life consonant with the doctrine of the Church.¹⁹ The christian faithful who have an ecclesial formation and who are inserted into the liturgical and spiritual life of their own autonomous Church, feel it their right to have

their own liturgy and spirituality. But unfortunately some christian faithful of certain *sui iuris* Churches are not conscious of their own rich patrimony because of some socio-historic reasons. So the Code advises the christian faithful to foster an understanding and appreciation of their own rite, and to observe it everywhere.²⁰ This canon also has its root in *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* which advises all the members of the oriental Churches to aim always at a more perfect knowledge and practice of their rites, and if they have fallen away due to circumstances of times or persons, they are to strive to return to their ancestral traditions (OE 6).

It was the orientals themselves who were primarily responsible for the westernisation of their usages and discipline. They were even more inclined to latinise their liturgy and canon law than the roman authorities themselves. This is why the decree addresses them and recommends them to be, more than the others, observers of authentic eastern tradition.²¹ First and

17. CCEO c. 40 § 2; Cf. CS c. 1 § 3; *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* 6; *Nuntia* 3 (1976) 48; *Nuntia* 22 (1986) 31-32.

18. Cf. CCEO cc. 674; 683; 699 § 2 & 3; 701; 704; 710; 714; 742 etc.

19. CCEO c. 17, "Ius est christifidelibus, ut cultum divinum persolvant secundum praescripta propriae Ecclesiae sui iuris utque propriam vitae spiritualis formam sequantur doctrinae quidem Ecclesiae consentaneam." Originally this canon had the phrase "Praescripta librorum liturgicorum propriae Ecclesiae sui iuris, but later the words "librorum liturgicorum" is omitted *ex officio* because it restricts the right affirmed in the canon: Cf. *Nuntia* 28 (1989) 17.

Cf. CIC 214; This canon is based on a number of conciliar texts such as *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* 3; *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 4; *Dignitatis Humanae* 2; *Gaudium et Spes* 26. This right of the christian faithful obliges the ministers to celebrate the Divine Worship accordingly.

20. CCEO c. 40 § 3. Ceteri quoque christifideles proprii ritus cognitionem et estimationem foveant eumque ubique observare tenetur, nisi iure aliquid excipitur. Cf. CCEO c. 713 § 2; CS c. 2 § 2; *Nuntia* 3 (1976) 48.

21. Cf. G. D. Gallaro, "*Orientalium Ecclesiarum* deserves more attention", 298. Even today some orientals are very eager to latinise their liturgy and spirituality or to remain in the latinised stage against the official teaching of the Catholic Church and the repeated admonitions of the respective Roman Congregations.

foremost the orientals themselves must observe the oriental discipline and for this purpose they must obtain an ever greater knowledge of their own rite.

7. Obligations of Those Who Work Among the Orientals

Latinisation and many other problems which mutilated the oriental Churches in the past were mainly due to the ignorance or vitiated knowledge of some of the organs of Vatican and the latin missionaries about the patrimony of the oriental Churches. Because of this the popes of this century have emphasized the study of oriental patrimony by all the christian faithful.²² By better understanding of the varieties of the rites in the Catholic Church and of the norms for inter-Church relations many difficulties could be avoided. The decree *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* advises all those who by reason of their office or their apostolic ministry have frequent dealings with the eastern Churches or their faithful should be instructed as their office demands in theoretical and practical knowledge of the rites, discipline, doctrine, history and character of the members of the eastern Churches (OE 6).

Such persons are those who by reason of their office work among the

orientals, for example, representatives of the Apostolic See and those who by reason of their apostolic ministry work among the orientals, namely missionaries, pastors, preachers and bishops to whom is entrusted the care of the souls of the oriental faithful. Besides these come also professors and lecturers of ecclesiastical universities, ecclesiastical faculties, seminaries and those who moderate matters concerning oriental churches in Rome. All of them should have veneration of oriental patrimony and sufficient knowledge according to the nature of their office.²³ This advice has received legal force in the new Oriental Code as canon 41 which retains fully the same content and binds also the Latin Church.²⁴ Though *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* has intended only the Latin Church by putting the "eastern Churches" together as its counterpart, the Code speaks of "christian faithful of any autonomous Church" which have frequent relations with the christian faithful of another autonomous Church.

8. Baptized Non-Catholics Coming to Full Communion

The baptized non-Catholics coming to full communion must retain their own rite. According to the Council "the baptized members of any non-Catholic Church or community who

22. Benedict XV, "Dei Providentis", AAS (1917) 529-531; Pius XI, "Rerum Orientalium" AAS (1928) 277-288; Cf. also J. Krajcar, The Christian East and Popes from Leo XIII to Pius XII, *Seminarium* 15 (1975) 299-315. During the solemn presentation of the Oriental Code to the Synod of Bishops Pope John Paul II emphasized the importance of the comparative study of both Codes in all the canon law faculties, see L' Osservatore Romano, 27 October 1990, 4-5.

23. Cf. M. M. Wojanar, Decree on the Oriental Catholic Churches", *Jurist* 25 (1965) 190; C. Pujol, *Decretum Concilii Vaticani II*, 66.

24. CCEO c. 41. "Christifideles cuiusvis Ecclesiae sui iuris, etiam Ecclesiae Latinae, qui ratione officii, ministri vel muneris frequentes cum christifidelibus alterius Ecclesiae sui iuris relationes habent, in cognitione et cultu ritus eiusdem ecclesiae accurate pro gravitate officii, ministerii vel muneris, quod implent, instituantur."

comes to the fullness of Catholic communion, must retain each his own rite where he is and follow it to the best of his ability and they are to be enrolled in the autonomous Church of the same rite, without prejudice to the right of appealing to the Apostolic See in special cases affecting persons, communities or districts" (OE 4). This obligation is attached by the Second Vatican Council abrogating c. 11 § 1 of *motu proprio Cleri sanctitati* which permitted baptized oriental non Catholics to transfer to any rite, even to the Latin, on their coming to the communion with the Church.²⁵ This was contrary to the solemn declarations of the Roman Pontiffs, the discipline which was long existed, the preservation of the oriental rites and natural equity.²⁶ The decree retains only the common right of the christians to recourse to the Holy See in special cases. The new Oriental Code canonised the same idea as canon 35 without any difference, which imposes an obligation to conserve one's own rite.²⁷ Therefore the non-catholics coming to full communion should preserve their original rite ie. they should be enrolled in the autonomous Church of the same rite in the catholic communion.

9. Priestly and Religious Formation and the Preservation of Patrimony

Priestly and religious formation is of vital importance to any autonomous Church. The very existence of a Church is at stake if her priests and religious are not formed according to her patrimony. The ecclesial formation of the christian faithful depends on the clergy and religious. The cause of the anomalic situation of certain oriental Churches was the formation of priests and religious in latin seminaries and ecclesiastical faculties. They were formed according to the liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony of the Latin Church. This is very clear in the case of the Syro-Malabar Church. The majority of bishops and priests of the Syro-Malabar Church received their priestly formation in the Latin Church seminaries and from the Latin Church priests. Therefore they could not receive sound formation in their own rite²⁸. Naturally one cannot expect them to be deep rooted in their own spiritual heritage and ritual patrimony and this state of affairs has unfortunately done considerable harm to the Syro-Malabar Church. The religious

25. CS c. 11 § 1. Baptizati acatholici ritus orientalis. qui in catholicam Ecclesiam admittuntur, ritum maluerint amplecti possunt; optandum tamen ut ritum proprium retineant.

The Question of non catholics coming to full communion provoked much discussion in the commissions. Some held that the liberty of the person coming to full communion should be respected. For a detailed study of the question see C. Pujol, *Decretum Concilii Vaticani II*... 48- 61; I. Zuzek, "Animadversiones Quaedam in Decretum de Ecclesis Orientalibus Catholicis Concilii Vaticani II" *Periodica* 55 (1966) 271-276; P. J. Pospishil, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*..., 15-17; R. F. Esposito II *decreto conciliare*, 105-115.

26. M. M. Wojanar, "the Decree on the Oriental Catholic Churches," 186.

27. CCEO c. 35, "Baptizati acatholici ad plenam communionem cum Ecclesia catholica convenientps proprium ubique terrarum ritineat ritum eumque colant et pro viribus observent, proinde ascrbantur Ecclesiae sui iuris eiusdem ritus salvouire adeundi Sedem Apostolicam in casibus specialibus personarum, communitatum vel regionum." Cf. *Nuntia* 3, (1976) 51; *Nuntia* 19 (1984). 6; *Nuntia* 28 (1989) 26-27.

28. It was only in 1962 that the St Thomas Apostolic seminary was established for the St Thomas Christian Churches. The St Joseph's Pontifical Seminary

and laity guided by these fathers also grope in the dark²⁹.

The new Oriental Code particularly emphasizes the obligation of the hierarchy to impart proper ecclesial formation to its future clergy. It is the proper right and obligation of each Church to train clerics and her other ministers especially through the establishment and operation of seminaries³⁰. The Synod of Bishops or the Council of Hierarchs shall publish a **Particular Programme** for the training of clerics, in accordance with the character of rite and keeping in forefront the

tradition of its own autonomous Church³¹. This canon is in agreement with *Optatum Totius* which demands a **Particular Programme of Priestly Training** for each nation or rite (OT n.1). Within the framework of common law this special programme enables the personal, spiritual, doctrinal, liturgical and pastoral formation of the candidates consonant with the patrimony and special character of each Church.

Because of the special circumstances, the students even if admitted into a seminary of another autonomous Church, are to be formed in their own

Alwaye, formerly known as "Puthenpally Seminary" has its origin in 1866. The formation given in this seminary under the latin carmelite missionaries was substantially latin. In 1976 this seminary was handed over to native priests and now it is under Kerala Bishops' Conference.

29. Cf. A. P. Urumbakal, *Vocations in India Volume One: The Religious Women*, Rome 1986, 305-306; G. Panicker, *An Analysis of the present Ecclesial Situation in India*, in T. VELLILAMTHADAM and others eds. *Ecclesial Identity of Thomas Christians*, Kottayam 1985, 155-158.

This facts can be clearly seen in the history of the liturgical restoration and renewal of the Syro-Malabar Church. In 1934 the indigenous bishops of this Church unanimously requested the Holy See to approve the syriac translation of the Roman Pontifical for the use of the Syro-Malabar Church: But on December 1, 1934 Pope Pius XI rejected this proposal saying "It is unlawful to foster latinizing practices among easterners. The Holy See does not want to make latins but catholics. Compromises are neither generous nor efficacious Cf. J. Crajcar." The Christian East and Popes from Leo XIII to Pius XII *Seminarium* 15 (1975) 308-309; J. Parecattil, *Liturgy Ente Drushtiyil*, (Malayalam) Ernakulam 1987, 49). The Syro-Malabar Bishops' conference also objected the introduction of restored Qurbana in 1962 and they generally preferred latinised Qurbana existed before 1962, (See Joseph Parecattil, 81-87). This resulted in the approval *ad experimentum* of the 1968 Qurbana. Finally on 24 July 1985, the Congregation after long study and consultation gave its final judgement in accordance with the non-latinised liturgical tradition of this Church under the title *Final Judgement of the S. Congregation for the Oriental Churches Concerning the Order of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana* (Prot. N. 955/65). Then on 19 December 1985 the Congregation approved and promulgated the Raza text of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana. There was much rumblings and grumblings against this reformed text from some bishops and as a result on May 5, 1988 the Congregation issued a series of new directives under the title *Directives on the Order of Syro-Malabar Qurbana in Solemn and Simple Forms* allowing many exemptions and dispensations which go against the genuine spirit of oriental liturgical tradition (Cf. Prot. N. 955/65).

30. CCEO c. 38. The source of the canons on clerical formation is the decree on the Training of Priests "Optatum totius", AAS 58 (1966) 713-727.
31. Cf. c. 330; *Nuntia* 8 (1979) 70-71; *Nuntia* 20 (1985) 70-71.

rite. Any custom to the contrary is reprobated by the Code³². That is the students must be formed in the liturgy, theology, spirituality, discipline and socio-cultural milieu of their own autonomous Church. Liturgy is to be taught in virtue of its special importance as the necessary source of doctrine and of a truly christian spirit (c. 350 § 3) and they are to participate assiduously in the divine liturgy, which shines forth as the font and culmination of seminary life as is of the whole of the christian life³³.

10. Preservation of Patrimony and Catechetical Formation

The proper catechetical formation of the faithful is the common responsibility of the whole autonomous Church. Catechism is the sharing of the faith experience of an autonomous Church according to her liturgical, theological, spiritual patrimony. The

parents (c.618), parish community and its pastor (cc. 619, 624, & 289), associations and movements (c. 620), the eparchial bishop (cc. 623 & 196) and above all the Synod of Bishops or the Council of Hierarchs (c.621) have grave obligation to give proper catechism to its members.³⁴ It is the duty of the Synod of bishops or Council of Hierarchs of each autonomous Church to issue norms for catechetical formation, arranged in a Catechetical Directory, observing the provisions made by the supreme authority of the Church and taking into account the special character of oriental Churches, so that the biblical and liturgical dimensions of catechesis as well as the traditions of the same autonomous Church in patrology, hagiography and even iconography.³⁵ This canon greatly emphasizes the fact that catechism should be in conformity with the patrimony of each Church. Catechism books or other writings intended for catechetical formation need ecclesiastical approval.³⁶

32. CCEO cc. 343 & 333. Though there are some advantages, practically speaking it is very difficult to impart proper formation in one's own rite in a common seminary of different rites. It seems to be possible in a seminary of different *sui iuris* Churches belonging to the same rite or at least in a seminary common to different oriental rites. But it is impossible to have a proper formation in a common seminary of the latin Church and an oriental Church which have entirely different patrimony.
33. CCEO c. 346 § 2 n. 2. This points to the proper celebration of liturgy in all the religious and priestly formation houses.
34. The canons on catechetical formation are based on pope John Paul II's apostolic exhortation "Catechesi Tradendae" AAS 71 (1979) 1277-1340 & "Directorium Catecheticum Generale", published by the Congregation for Clergy AAS 64 (1972) 97-176.
35. CCEO c. 621. Originally this canon did not include the ecclesial, liturgical, patrological dimension of catechism, but later it is unanimously accepted. Cf. *Nuntia* 11 (1980) 60; *Nuntia* 12 (1981) 22; *Nuntia* 17 (1983) 31. Such a catechism calls for the urgent necessity of catechetical books according to the liturgical, theological, spiritual, disciplinary patrimony of each Church.
36. CCEO cf. 658. Ecclesiastical approval can be given by Bishop for his dioceses, Metropolitan for the province, and the Synod of Bishops or Council of Hierarchs is the books are intended for the whole Church. Nevertheless it is, greatly desirable that catechism books are made for the whole autonomous Church, if possible.

Conclusion

We have examined in short the obligations of all christian faithful as regards the preservation of the Patrimony of their Church. Both the Second Vatican Council and the Oriental Code invite the oriental Churches to preserve their ritual patrimony and "to return to their ancestral traditions if they have fallen away due to circumstances of times or persons".

It is true that Church must adapt itself to the socio-cultural and philosophical milieu of the people. But this does not consist in the destruction of the patrimony of a Church—its individuality and identity—and the formation of something new. Inculturation is the spontaneous assimilation and organic development of a Church as a result of its interaction and encounter with the cultural, philosophical and historical circumstances of each nation. It is a well accepted fact that most of the oriental Churches are incarnations of Christ's Church in the socio-cultural milieu of the

people so much so that they are called even national Churches. If any oriental Church is alienated from the culture of the people, it is mainly because of the latinisation, or westernisation, by which they lost their identity that was originally developed in the cultural milieu of the people. The latinisation also hindered the spontaneous and organic growth of many oriental Churches. So the first step towards inculturation is to return to their original oriental identity. If they do so they can find themselves better inserted into the heart of their nation and ensure a spontaneous growth assimilating new cultural elements.

So the main task of the oriental Churches today is to be faithful to their authentic oriental identity and thus fulfil their specific mission in the world. "Everyone should realize that it is of supreme importance to understand, venerate, preserve and foster the rich liturgical and spiritual patrimony of the eastern Churches in order faithfully to preserve the fullness of Christian tradition..." (UR 15).

Paul Pallath

Mar Narsai and His Liturgical Homilies on Christian Initiation

Narsai, the Liturgical Homilist of the East Syrian Church

Narsai is one of the most profound and original theologians of the East Syrian Church. As a great teacher, prolific writer and famous orator, he contributed very much to this ancient Church during the 5th century. He is the founder of the reputed school of Nisibis. Regarding the life of Narsai we have many sources at our disposal.¹ As a brilliant student he had genuine and deep interest in the riches of knowledge. Though when a child he began his studies in his own village,² he became an orphan at an early age.

Then through the help of his uncle Amanuel who was an abbot in Kephari Mari,³ Narsai pursued his studies at the famed school of Edessa. According to his biographer, Barhadbsabba Arbaia, Narsai spent about 20 years intermittently at the School of Edessa in the pursuit of learning.⁴ Here Narsai acquired for himself the title of an eminent scholar. The time he spent at the school of Edessa endeared him to the community and he had become a part of its life. Subsequently the community elected him unanimously to fill the vacancy of master and head of the school.⁵ Scher places this event

1. Cf. Barhadbsabba Arbaia, *Histoire de l'Eglise*, Syriac ed. and French tr. F. Nau, *Patrologia Orientalis* 9, Turnhout, 1913, pp. 588-615; Barhadbsabba of Halwan, *Cause de la Fondation des Ecoles*, Syriac ed. and French tr. A. Scher, Turnhout, 1908, pp. 319-404; Mari, Amri et Silba, *De Patriarchis Nestorianorum*, ed. H. Gismondi, Romae, 1849, pp. 43-48; A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literature*, Bonn, 1922, pp. 109-113; E. Tisseran's article on "Narsai" in the *Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique* XI, premiere partie, cols. 26-30; Ortis de Urbina, *Patrologia Syriaca*, Roma, 1965, pp. 115-118; A. Vööbus, *A History of the School of Nisibis*, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* 266, Subsidia 26, Louvain, 1965, pp. 57-65; P. Gignoux, *Homilies of Narsai on the Creation*, ed. and tr. into French with an Introduction, *Patrologia Orientalis* 34, Turnhout, 1968, pp. 419-423; F. G. McLeod, *Narsai's Metrical Homilies on Nativity, Epiphany, Passion, Resurrection and Ascension*, ed. and tr. into English with an introduction, *Patrologia Orientalis* 40, Turnhout, 1979, pp. 7 ff. It is A. Scher and F. Nau who have made known the person of Narsai and his importance in the Persian Church to the Western reader.
2. Cf. Vööbus, *School of Nisibis*, p. 57. The name of the village is Maaltaya which is at the foot of the mountains of Kurdistan.
3. Vööbus, *School of Nisibis*, p. 57.
4. Barhadbsabba Arbaia, *Histoire*, pp. 596 - 598.
5. *Ibid.* p. 559.

in the year 437 A. D.⁶ As the tradition of the school has kept it, Narsai was the director and master of the school for 20 years.⁷ In the school of Edessa, Narsai proved himself an efficient administrator. In 457 he had to flee from Edessa, and he came to Nisibis with his followers. There he founded the great "School of Nisibis". Narsai was the director of the school for 45 years, until his death.⁸

Among his contemporaries, Narsai enjoyed great reputation. "A combination of various gifts and talents secured him a place which caused his adversaries and some of his friends to envy him," says Vööbus.⁹ Primarily his gift of language made him a master of the Syriac literature. Like St. Ephrem, Narsai too was a genius in the art of poetry and most of his works are in the form of poetry. Barhadbsabba Arbaia sums up the talent of Narsai in one sentence: "He put the truthful thought of Orthodoxy into the elaborate form of the *memre* to the pleasant melodies."¹⁰

The immense reputation he had earned for himself is echoed in the epithets by which tradition has immortalized him. Abdiso, the 13th century bibliographer of Narsai, introduces him as "harp of the (Holy) Spirit."¹¹ In other sources he appears as the "Tongue of the Orient," and the "Poet of the Christian religion," or the "admirable doctor."¹²

Narsai possessed special skills in instruction; his success in the pedagogical activity in Edessa as well as later in Nisibis speaks loudly of this. People did not hesitate to honour him with the title *Raba*, the Great—the Master.¹³ Above all Narsai was a man of God. A man of prayer, poor and simple in life style, he was an ascetic par excellence.¹⁴

In "Enumeratio Librorum Omnium Ecclesiasticorum" Abdiso assigns over 300 *memre* (metrical homilies) and other works to Narsai.¹⁵ Barhadbsabba Arbaia records in a general way that Narsai composed a homily for each

6. Cf. footnote 1, in the work of Barhadbsabba Halwan, ed. by A. Scher, *Foundation des Ecoles*, p. 386.

7. Ibid. p. 383.

8. R. H. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, tr. English, with an Introduction by Connolly and an Appendix by Edmond Bishop, *Texts and Studies* 6, n. 1, Cambridge, 1909, p. x.

9. Vööbus, *School of Nisibis*, p. 88.

10. Barhadbsabba Arbaia, *Histoire*, p. 612.

11. Cf. Abdiso, *Enumeratio Librorum Omnium Ecclesiasticorum*, ed. J. S. Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* III, pars prima, Romae, 1725, P. 65.

12. Mari et al. *De Patriarchis*, p. 44.

13. Vööbus, *School of Nisibis*, p. 89.

14. Ibid.

15. Cf. Abdiso, *Enumeratio Librorum*, pp. 63 – 66. Abdiso is the 13th century bibliographer of Narsai. His work is edited by J.S. Assemani in *Bibliotheca Orientalis* III, and the first part deals with the Syro-Nestorian writers. In "Catalogus Syrorum" chapter 53, while speaking about Narsai, Abdiso has the following statement regarding his work: "Narses Sancti Spiritus Cythara Edidit Commentaria in Genesim, Exodum, Leviticum, Numeros, Josue filium Mun, In libros Judicum, & Ecclesiaste, In Isaiam, & Duodecim, In Jeremiam, & Ezechielem, Et in prophetiam Danielis. Duodecim preterea tomos Orationum, Quae sunt numero tercentum & sexaginta. Edidit etiam Liturgiam et Expositionem Sacramentorum, & Baptismum."

day of the year and wrote in opposition to Jacob of Sarug.¹⁶ Barhadsabba of Halwan says that Narsai wrote more than three hundred metrical homilies with other works.¹⁷ According to McLeod, of these about eighty *memre* and perhaps one *soghitha* (dialogal sequence) and a few hymns have survived.¹⁸ This statements is mainly based on the work by A. Mingana and other authors who made studies on Narsai.

In the introduction to his work Mingana lists 81 homilies that he has found surviving in manuscripts.¹⁹ Mingana's listing has become an accepted way of designating Narsai's homilies, but regarding the number Mingana himself notes that the homily 43 "the second on the martyrs" is attributed in a Vatican manuscript to Jacob of Sarug²⁰ In addition he questions the authenticity of the homily 15 "On correction" and the homily 53 "On the Parable of the Seed." Homily 35 "On Mysteries" is also doubtful at least in part.²¹ However, Don Connolly has proved with convincing arguments a substantial authenticity of the homily on "Mysteries."²² Prof. Macomber also asserts the same in his study on the "Manuscripts of the Metrical Homilies of Narsai."²³ Jammo's recent study on the structure of the Caldean Mass

throws more light on this aspect. His research includes the study of the manuscripts of this homily and he too arrives at the conclusion that Narsai is the author of the homily "On the Mysteries."²⁴

We come closer to Narsai through his literary creation. Vööbus rightly comments, "through his writings a master speaks to us, who belongs to the few of the most eminent who have reached the zenith of producing elegance of style in Syriac and writing what were to become the recognized classics in Syriac literature."²⁵ Most of the works of Narsai are arranged within the framework of the Church year and oriented according to the liturgical traditions. Mingana, while giving the list of the existing homilies at the end of the Introduction to *Homilies et Carmina* assigns them for the use of specific liturgical days or seasons.²⁶

Bible was an inexhaustable source of Narsai's literary creation. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament events and persons inspired him for literary meditation, and most of his themes are biblical. B. Arbaia makes the following worthy statement about Narsai: "He arranged the sense of the Scriptures according to the

16. Brahadsabba Arbaia, *Histoire*, p. 612.

17. Barhadsabba of Halwan, *Fondation des Ecoles*, p. 368.

18. McLeod, *Metrical Homilies*, p.8, n. 6.

19. A. Mingana, *Narsai Doctoris Syri Homiliae et Carmina*, 2 vols.. Mossoul, 1905, pp. 26-31.

20. Ibid. p. 23.

21. F. G. McLeod, *The Soteriology of Narsai*, Pontifical Oriental Institute Rome, 1968, pp. 36-51.

22. R.H. Connolly, *Liturgical Homilies*, pp. xii ff.

23. W.F. Macomber, "The Manuscripts of the Metrical Homilies of Narsai," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 39, 1973, pp. 283 ff.

24. Y. H. Jammo, *La structure de la Messe Chaldeenne*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 207, Roma, 1979 pp. 13-17.

25. Vööbus, *School of Nisibis*, p. 69.

26. Mingana, *Homiliae et Carmina*, pp. 26-30.

thought of the holy fathers in pleasant antiphons is the likeness of the blessed David."²⁷

The life of Narsai was deeply rooted in the spirit of Christian worship. This is why, as we have mentioned, he liturgically oriented his works and arranged them within the framework of the Church year. At a time when only bishops usually taught and spoke on matters related to the Christian community, Narsai who was only a priest wrote and taught on liturgical subjects.²⁸ Narsai was more pastoral minded, and tried to build up the Body of Christ into a spiritual temple through a worshipping community. In a wider sense all the homilies of Narsai may be called as liturgical homilies. However, there are some which deal specifically with liturgical matters and some which are meant to commemorate special liturgical days or feasts. There are four homilies which treat specific liturgical subjects. They are:²⁹

Homily 35 – An Exposition of the Mysteries

„ 38 – On the Mysteries of the Church and on Baptism

„ 39 – On Baptism

„ 59 – On the Church and the Priesthood

The homilies which are meant to commemorate special liturgical days or feasts are:

Homily nos. 29, 30, 31 – For the feast of the Palm Sunday

- „ 46 – On the Feast of Pentecost
 „ 54 – On the Cross
 „ 11 – On the three Doctors, Diodore, Theodore and Nestorius
 „ 17 – On a Patron Saint

Besides these liturgical homilies there are other hymns attributed to Narsai and used in the liturgical prayer or the East Syrian Church, for example, *Tu'gay* and *Tawdi l-Taba*, etc.

The Liturgical Homilies on Christian Initiation

The main objective in this paper is a structural analysis of the liturgical homilies of Narsai on Christian Initiation. This analysis will enable us to have a better understanding of the Rites and their significance in the East Syrian Tradition. Two of the homilies of Narsai are specifically on Baptism. These two separate homilies are complementary and form one unit in the whole structure. Though the Baptismal rites are given, for the major part the homilies contain Narsai's theological and spiritual reflection on the Mystery of Baptism. A. Mingana edited both these homilies, but in reverse order as will be evident in the structural analysis. The numbers of the homilies in the Mingana edition are nos. 21 and 22 (which are according to the list nos. 38 and 39). No. 21 "On the Mysteries of the Church and on Baptism" speaks about "water" (immersion) and the first communion of the newly baptized, while no. 22

27. Barhadbsabba Arbaia, *Histoire*, p. 612.

28. Mingana, *Homiliae et Carmina*, p. 14.

29. Mingana gives the list of 81 homilies at the end of the Preface of his edition *Homiliae et Carmina*. In two volumes he edited 47 homilies, and the numbering of the list and in the edition are different. For example, no. 35 "An Exposition of the Mysteries" according to the list, but 17 in edition. We use the numbers according to the list.

speaks about the anointing – *Rushma*. In the East Syrian Tradition *Rushma* always preceded “water”. This fact can be noticed in other Syriac writings, as the *Acts of Judas Thomas*, the *Acts of John – the son of Zebedee*, A Syriac account of the baptism of Constantine, the account of the baptism of Rabbula, Bishop of Edessa and so on.

It is to be noted that these homilies originally formed two distinct discourses. This is clear from the fact that each opens with a preface of some length introducing the subject to be discussed. The MSS, too, give them under separate titles. Further they do not always appear together in the MSS – thus, the Berlin MS contains no. 21, but not no. 22.³⁰

As to the reverse order in Mingana edition, Connolly says that we do not know whether or not Mingana has any manuscript authority for the order in which he prints them.³¹ In his preface, Mingana himself says that he has himself arranged the Homilies according to their appropriateness to the various festivals of the ecclesiastical year, without regard for their position in the MSS.³² Connolly’s observation seems to be right, “whether the arrangement is the editor’s own, or whether he found it already in his MSS, it is probably due in the first instance to the fact no.21 speaks of the water of baptism, and no.22 of the anointing, – which was apparently taken to be the post-baptismal *sigillum*.”³³ When we examine the contents and the structure of the homilies it is quite apparent that the two homilies are complementary and that no. 22 must stand before no. 21. Moreover, we can understand also

that no post baptismal anointing is thought of. In our structural analysis we follow the order according to the sequence of the rites, i. e. “On Baptism” (no. 22) and “On the Mysteries of the Church and on Baptism” (no. 21). In homily no. 21 the term “Mysteries” signify the Eucharist. The subject of the Eucharist is introduced only at the end as a supplement to the treatment of Baptism – with reference to the first communion of the newly baptized.

Homily No.22 on Baptism

The first part of the Rites of Christian Initiation and their interpretations are set forth in the Homily ‘On Baptism’. The following are the essential parts which we can distinguish in the structure of this homily:

- a) Introduction.
- b) The Renunciation of Satan.
- c) The Confession of Faith.
- d) The one who is to be baptized kneels down with a piece of sackcloth about him.
- e) The sponsor who vouches for the sincerity of him who is to be baptized.
- f) The blessing of the Oil.
- g) The signing with Oil on the forehead of the catechumen in the name of the Trinity.
- h) The anointing of his whole body.

a) Introduction

Narsai begins the homily with his own reflections on the mystery of Baptism, “..... As in a furnace He (the Creator) re-cast our image in Baptism; and instead of our clay He

30. Cf. Connolly, *Liturgical Homilies*, p. xlvi.

31. Ibid.

32. Mingana, *Homiliae et Carmina* p. 28.

33. Connolly, *Liturgical Homilies*, p. xlvi.

has made us spiritual gold. Spiritually, without colours, was He pleased to depict us; that the beauty of our image might not again be corrupted by death He created a second time the creation which He had created in the beginning; and He purged out from it the old things of mortality. The rust of iniquity He willed to wipe away from mortals."³⁴ It is characteristic of Narsai to speak of the high status of the priesthood and its functions in glowing terms whenever the subject is referred. In the two Homilies on Baptism we see very often Narsai is alluding to the excellence of the Priesthood. God has appointed priests, the weak human beings, as mediators in order to 're-cast our image in Baptism'. The Sacrament of Baptism is conferred by these mediators, as Narsai comments at the very beginning of the Homily, "Out of our clay He has made treasure-keepers of His hidden things; and from it He has appointed stewards to dispense life. He chose Him priests as mediators between him and our people; and He has sent them on an embassy to men. To them He entrusted the boundless wealth of the Spirit, that they might lovingly distribute it according to its greatness..."³⁵

b) Renunciation of Satan

After the introduction on the Mystery of Baptism and on priesthood, Narsai turns to the rites of Christian Initiation. The first part of the rite is the Renunciation of Satan. The priest says to the catechumens: "Renounce ye the Evil One and his power and his angels and his service

and his error"³⁶. This is an imperative saying. Narsai's own comment on this is that they first renounce the dominion of the Evil One, who brought them to slavery; and then they confess the power of the Creator who has set them free. The one who approaches Baptism has a warfare with Satan, and his angels and with his service. In what follows, Narsai goes on to explain that Satan's angels are heretics of all kinds and he gives a list of some of them with their viles—Mani, Valentinus, Arius, Eunomius, Apollinarius, Paul, the stubborn, Eutyches and so on. The service and inventions of the Evil One are the circus and stadium and the theatres, and the riotous sounds of the songs which he has composed and written. His errors are soothsayings and witchcrafts of all sorts³⁷. The renunciation formula probably was, "I renounce Satan and his power and his angels and his service." Connolly thinks that possibly "and his invention" is to be added.³⁸

c) The Confession of Faith

After the renunciation follows the Confession of Faith. The catechumen makes the confession of faith in the Creator, as he says, "I have turned away from the Evil One to the Creator."³⁹

Narsai comments that he was a wanderer like the younger son of the parable of the Gospel. Now that he has turned and come back, and at his return the heavenly assemblies are rejoicing, and they are escorting him as a dead man that has returned to life. From Satan's bitter slavery, the

34. Ibid. p. 32.

35. Ibid. p. 34.

36. Ibid. p. 36.

37. Ibid. pp. 37-38.

38. Cf. Ibid. p. xlix, p. 44.

39. Ibid. p. 38.

sinner has fled; and he has taken refuge with good Lord whose love is sweet. For, he says, "Harken, ye rebellious ones, I have no part with you". And he calls the assemblies of God saying, "Come, ye spiritual ones, rejoice with me, for I am saved alive from destruction; I am your fellow servant and a fellow-labourer in your works; and with that the Lord to whom ye minister I am desirous of serving."⁴⁰ Now the catechumen as an exile stands naked, without covering. "Naked he stands and stripped before the Judge that by his wretched plight he may win pity to cover him. Without covering he pleads his cause against his adversary, that the King may see him and swiftly exact judgement for him."⁴¹ Thus with a humble and penitent heart he stands before the Creator.

d) Kneeling down

The following part of the rite symbolises the contrite heart of the catechumen. He kneels down with a piece of sack-cloth about him as a sign of repentance. The text reads, "He bends his knees and bows his head in his confusion, and is ashamed to look aloft towards the Judge. He spreads sackcloth (upon him); and then he draws near to ask for mercy, making mention of his subjection to the Evil One. "According to Narsai his kneeling down has a double significance: one that it depicts his fall, the other that he is making payment as a debtor".⁴²

e) The Sponsor

In the baptismal rites of Narsai, there is the sponsor who vouches for

the sincerity of him who is to be baptised. "A sponsor also he brings with him to the court, that he may come into bear witness to his preparation and his sincerity. With sincerity he protests that he will abide in love of truth; and his companion becomes surety (saying): 'Yea, true, is the protestation of his soul' He becomes a guide to his words and his actions; and he shows him the conduct of spiritual life".⁴³ The sponsor calls the name of the catechumen and presents him before the priests that they may receive him as heir, son and citizen of the Kingdom. Then the priest writes his name in the books to be preserved in the archives.

f) The blessing of the Oil

According to the structure the next part is the blessing of the oil. But before introducing this rite, Narsai once again sings the great function of the priest by whose hand "the creator has been pleased to reveal His Power".⁴⁴ God has appointed His priests as stewards over His possessions that as trusty officers they may distribute wealth to the sons of His house. He had given them power to sign His flock in the name of the Holy Trinity. In the words of Narsai, "life does the priest give to his fellows by his ministry".⁴⁵ The priest consecrates the Oil in the name of the Trinity, "the three names he casts upon the oil, and consecrates it, that it may be sanctifying the uncleanness of men by its holiness."⁴⁶ It is interesting to note how Narsai makes a comparison here, the priest he compares to a 'physician' and the oil to a curing 'drug', and says that the physician

40. Ibid. pp. 38-39.

41. Ibid. p. 39.

42. Ibid. pp. 39-40.

43. Ibid. p. 40.

44. Ibid. pp. 40-41.

45. Ibid. p. 42.

46. Ibid. p. 43.

heals all diseases by the power of this drug.

g) Signing the forehead

After the Oil has been consecrated, the priest, then proceeds to the important rite of the anointing. He signs the forehead of catechumen in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. "The cause of the signing on the forehead is" says Narsai "(that it may be) for the confusion of the devils; that when they discern (it) on the head of a man, they may be overcome by him or (it). On account of these (the devils) are performed the mysteries of oil and water, that they may be of, an armour against their warfare and attacks. An armour is the oil with which the earth-born are anointed, that they may not be captured by the (evil) spirits in the hidden warfare. It is the great brand of the King of kings with which they are stamped, that they may serve (as soldiers) in the spiritual contest. On their forehead they receive the spiritual stamp, that it may be bright before angels and men."⁴⁷

h) Anointing of the Body

When the anointing of the head is over, the priest calls those to be baptized by their names and anoints their faces with the holy oil, and then their whole body. It is to be carefully noted that the anointing with the oil is done under the following formula: 'Such a one is anointed in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit'. The priest does not say 'I sign' 'but' is signed'. Let us

listen to Narsai's reflection on this rite: "Such a one is the servant of the King of all kings that are on high and below; and with His name he is branded that he may serve as a soldier according to His will 'Such a one', the priest says, is signed in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit... The priest does not say 'I sign' but 'is signed', for the stamp that he sets is not his, but his Lord's. He is (but) a minister who has been chosen by a favour to minister; because it is not his, it drives out iniquity and gives the spirit"⁴⁸. With the external sign (*rushma*) the priest, as physician, touches the hidden diseases that are within; and then he lays on the drug of the Spirit with the symbol (*āthā*) of water⁴⁹.

In his homilies, Narsai speaks of only one anointing, and this comes before the immersion. The 'Homily on Baptism' ends with the anointing rite. The above analysis of the structure of the homily shows that the baptismal rites in this Homily are not complete, and so it is necessary to study the Homily on 'The Mysteries of the Church and on Baptism' along with. It contains the second part of the baptismal rites, that is of water, and the first communion of the newly baptised.

Homily on the Mysteries of the Church and on Baptism

As it has been pointed out earlier this Homily contains the second part of the rites of Christian Initiation. From our analysis of the 'Homily on Baptism' it is clear that the Liturgical Homilies of Narsai are not mere enumeration of rites and actions, but

47. Ibid. p. 43.

48. Ibid. p. 44.

49. Ibid. p. 43.

they do explain the theological content and symbolism behind the rites. The homilies on the Christian Initiation emphasizes the fact that our final passage to the Heavenly Father has to be preceded by a life of death to sin and new life in Christ. The new creation is a life lived in Christ (2 Cor. 5, 13-19) – or rather, his life in us (Gal. 2,20). Following St. Paul, Narsai would say that to be saved is to be conformed to Christ by dying to self and rising to new life in him (2 Cor. 4,10ff; Rom. 6,3ff; Col. 2, 12-13; Gal. 2,20; Eph. 2,1ff; Phil. 2,5ff). Baptism as a new life in Christ is echoed in the reflections of Narsai in this Homily. He considers water as the womb that conceives and brings forth the new born. Herein we can see the Johannine concept of the new birth (Jn. 3, 3ff). Employing poetic imageries Narsai expresses his thought, "Our Lord has opened up for us the sweet spring of Baptism, and had given our race to drink of the sweetness of the life immortal. By the heat of iniquity, our mind was withered, and its fruits had dropped off, and He sprinkled His gift as dew and watered our soul..... This is a wonder, and, as we may say, full of astonishment, that the womb of the water should conceive and bring forth babies full grown..... Come, listen to the wonder of the new birth..."⁵⁰

We may distinguish the following parts in the Structure of the Homily:

- a) Introduction
- b) Consecration of the water.
- c) Baptism by immersion and the bowing of the head three times.
- d) Embrace and kiss by the priest and others.
- e) Vesting of the newly baptized.

- f) Mystery of the Eucharist.
- g) Communion.

a) Introduction

Before passing to the rites of the second part, in this homily too Narsai sings the praises of Priesthood through whose medium the new birth is effected. The priesthood is named the 'salt of the earth that seasons man with things spiritual'. The priest makes atonement. Compared to the heavenly beings, Narsai says that the status of the priest is higher. "An angel is great and we should say he is greater than thou, yet when he is compared with thy ministry he is less than thou. Holy is the seraph, and beauteous the cherub, and swift the watcher: yet they cannot run with the fleetness of the word of thy mouth. Glorious is Gabriel, and mighty is Michael, as their name testifies: yet every moment they are bowed down under the mystery which is delivered into thy hand..... The priests of the Church have grasped authority in the height and depth; and they give command to heavenly and earthly beings. They stand as mediators between God and man, and with their words they drive out iniquity from mankind..... The power of His gift He (God) delivered into the hand of the priests of the Church, that by it they might strengthen the feebleness of men who are in debt to sin. The debt of mankind, the priest pays by means of his ministry; and the written bond of his race he washes out with the water and renews it. As in a furnace he re-casts bodies in Baptism....."⁵¹

The first part of the Homily is a prelude to the symbolic rites of Baptism that are to follow. Then the

50. Ibid. p. 46.

51. Ibid. pp. 47-50.

author introduces the rites after the anointing with the Oil. The Homily on Baptism (no. 22) abruptly ends with the anointing of the Oil, and does not mention of the rite of water. In early Syriac accounts of the baptismal rite there is no allusion to the use of oil, or chrism, after the immersion, Syriac writers of the 4th and 5th centuries speak of only one anointing, which they call the *Rushma*, 'sign', and this came immediately before the water. In the present homily (no. 21) Narsai also does not mention of an anointing after the water. Consequently, there is no doubt that this Homily is the continuation of the preceding homily.

b) Consecration of the water

In the structural analysis of the rites, first in order is the consecration of the water. In the name of the Holy Trinity the priest blesses the water. "In the name of the Divinity, the three Names, he consecrates the water, that it may suffice to accomplish the cleansing of the defiled".⁵² Narsai would say that it is the power of the Divine names that purifies man through the symbolism of water. And so Narsai comments on the consecrated water, "The power of the Divinity dwells in the visible waters, and by the force of His power they dissolve the might of the Evil One and Death. The Evil One and Death are undone by Baptism; and the resurrection of the body and the redemption of the soul are preached therein. In it, as in a tomb, body and soul are buried, and they die and live (again) with a type of resurrection that is to be at the end."⁵³ Baptism is death to sin and life in Christ.

c) Baptism by immersion

Baptism by immersion takes place immediately after the consecration of water. Narsai compares the water as the grave from which the new man emerges. "In the grave of the water the priest buries the whole man; and he resuscitates him by the power of life that is hidden in his words. In the door of the tomb of Baptism he stands equipped, and he performs there a mystery of death and of the resurrection. With the voice openly he preaches the power of what he is doing—how it is that a man dies in the water, and turns and lives again? He reveals and shows to him that is being baptized in whose it is that he is to die and swiftly come to life".⁵⁴

In baptism we partake of the death and resurrection of the Lord. The same formula as in anointing is also used for Baptism. The priest says that 'such a one is baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit'. He does not say 'I baptize—', but 'is baptized'. The reason for this formula is the same as that of anointing, for it is not he that baptizes, but the power that is set in the names. The one who is baptized bows his head three times at the calling of the name of the Trinity. According to Narsai this action has a particular significance, "with a mystery of our Redeemer he goes into the bosom of the font (of baptism) after the manner of the those three days in the midst of the tomb. Three days was our redeemer with the dead; so also he that is baptized:— the three times are three days."⁵⁵ The man puts off and casts away sin and death in Baptism, and to use Narsai's simile

52. Ibid. p. 50.

53. Ibid. pp. 50–51.

54. Ibid. p. 51.

55. Idem. The symbolism of the bows appears to be copied from Cyril of Jerusalem. Narsai applies the same symbolism to the three bows made by the priest during the Eucharistic celebrations. (p.23).

this he does after the manner of those garments which our Lord departing left in the tomb.

d) Embrace and Kiss

The important rites of Baptism is over and the one who is baptized emerges out of the water. He has been resurrected with Christ. He is born again and has become the member of the New Kingdom, a son of God and an heir to His inheritance. As he comes out of the water the priest receives and embraces him. He resembles a new born baby when he is lifted up from the water, and as a baby every one embraces and kisses him. This loving embrace is a sign of acceptance by the community, yes, he has become a fulfilled member of the Christian Community.

e) Vesting

The community rejoices over this new member and vests him with fine clothes. "They adorn him as a bridegroom on the day of marriage supper. He also fulfils a sort of marriage supper in Baptism; and by his adornment he depicts the glory that is prepared for him. By the beauty of his garments he proclaims the beauty that is to be: here is a type with a type of that glory which incorruptible, he puts on the garments, that he may imitate mystically the things to be. Mystically he dies and is raised and is adorned; mystically he imitates the life immortal. His birth in Baptism is a symbol of that birth which is to be at the end, and the conduct of his life of that conversion which is to be in the Kingdom on high".⁵⁶ Such are the sublime thoughts of Narsai on the state of the newly baptized.

f) The Mystery of the Eucharist

In the following part of the Homily we have an exposition of the Mysteries (Eucharist) and the rite of the first Communion of the newly baptized. The exposition is in relation to the first Communion. The newly baptized has begun his new life in Christ, the spiritual life, and to grow and sustain this life he needs spiritual food. And this food is the very Body and Blood of our Lord. The Church as the spiritual Mother prepares spiritual milk for her new son. Listen to the words of Narsai himself, "In the way of spiritual life he begins to travel; and, like the spiritual beings, he lives by spiritual food. His mystical birth takes place in a manner spiritual; and according to his birth is the nourishment also that is prepared for him. New is his birth, and exceedingly strange to them of earth; and there is no measure to the greatness of the food with which he is nourished. As milk he sucks the divine mysteries, and by degrees they lead him, as a child, to the things to come. A spiritual mother (the Church) prepares spiritual milk for his life; and instead of the breasts she puts into his mouth the Body and Blood. With the Body and Blood, the Church keeps alive the sons of her, the son of her womb; and so reminds them of the great love of her betrothal. Her betrothed gave her His Body and His Blood as a pledge of life; that she might have power to give from her life⁵⁷".

These lines give ample evidence to the mystical mind and poetic expression of our liturgical Homilist. The homily continues with the explanation of the profound meaning of the Eucharist. As Narsai has already said that the Eucharist is the real spiritual food of the baptized person,

56. Ibid. p. 52.

57. Ibid. p. 52.

he is also trying to establish that in the Mystery we commemorate the very same Sacrifice of Christ. In the parable of the Prodigal son, the fatted calf is killed, but here Jesus Himself is immolated⁵⁸. And henceforth, the Christian has to live in his every day life the Paschal Mystery of Christ. Narsai continues, "One Man died on the cross on behalf of the mortals; and He taught them to travel by the way of His death and His life. His death and His life men depict in Baptism; and after they have died with Him they have been resuscitated mystically. In the new way of the resurrection of the dead they travel with Him; and they imitate upon earth the conduct of the heavenly beings. By the food of His body they drive out death from their bodies; and with His living blood they give minds to drink of life."⁵⁹

After having explained the meaning of the Holy Mystery in the life of the baptized person, Narsai gives a short narration of the rites of the Eucharist. In the Homily 'On the Exposition of the Mysteries', there is a detailed narration of the celebration. After the Baptismal rites the celebration of the Eucharist takes place, and in the present Homily which we analyse, Narsai explicitly mentions the important rites of the Mysteries. We have here the Anaphora part which begins with 'Let your minds be aloft', the rite of Consecration, the Epiclesis and so on.⁶⁰

g) Communion

The communion rite begins with the Lord's Prayer. There is no mention of 'elevation', but after the Our Father there are the words of the completion

of the Mysteries: "Holy is the Father, and holy is His Begotten, and the Spirit who is from Him (the Father) and to them is due holiness and praise from all mouths".⁶¹ While the priest gives the Communion he says, 'The Body of the King Messiah' and 'The Blood of Christ'. After the Communion rite the homily ends with Narsai's meditation on the Body and Blood of Christ. He exhorts all to approach the Mystery with deep faith. There is also a call to praise and thanksgiving at the end.

Conclusion.

By way of conclusion to the analysis of the structure of these Homilies we would like to make the following observation. In the Liturgical Homilies of Narsai, one does not find more of rubricism, but they express an awareness of Christian Worship and the profound meaning of Sacraments. They are the fruit of deep theological thinking and mystical experiences. The author is more interested to impart the meaning of Sacraments and Liturgy to his fellowmen. He was also well aware of the liturgical traditions that existed in the East Syrian Church, so he could develop a liturgical theology basing on this knowledge. The Homilies reveal the author as a man of profound faith which is the foundation of any theological thinking. As a mystic he tried to assimilate and experience Christ in his life. His Homilies are the sharing of this experience. Through them he gives an orientation for building up the Body of Christ into a spiritual temple and priesthood, and that was his aim. In Narsai we find the combination of a mystic, poet and theologian.

Dr. Thomas J. Thumpeparampil OFM. Cap.

58. Ibid. p. 53.

59. Ibid. p. 54.

60. Ibid. pp. 56ff.

61. Ibid. 59-60.

News

Diplomatic Relations established

The Holy See has recently established diplomatic relations with the former Soviet republics of Armenia; Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova. The relations with Russia, Ukraine and the Baltic republics had been established earlier. The Vatican sees it as an occasion to retrace the course of evangelisation among these peoples. Even during the communist regime there had been living and active ecclesial communities in these republics.

Mozarabic Rite restored

The Mozarabic Rite, the Latin Liturgy developed in Spain at the birth of Christianity in that country and preserved by Hispano-Romans, died out after some centuries. It was in use in several parishes in Toledo. Recently, under the leadership of Cardinal Marcelo Gonzalez Martin, Archbishop of Toledo, the liturgical texts have been restored to their original purity and ancient order of service. Pope John Paul II celebrated Mass in St. Peters Basilica to mark this liturgical renewal. The Pope in his homily praised this effort and hoped it would revive important features of the Christian spirituality of their ancestors, a spirituality which certainly contributed to shaping the characteristics of the Spanish people in their religious, cultural, social and political evolution.

Holy Father and Archbishop of Canterbury meet

Pope John Paul II and Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. George Carey had an hour-long meeting in Vatican. Their first meeting paved way to establish a strong personal relationship and to continue the dialogue between the Catholic and the Anglican Churches. On a number of issues progress has been made; and there remains sharp differences on some other vital issues.

Oriental Study Forum

The 63rd Meeting of the Oriental Study Forum – a voluntary Association of bishops, priests and laymen of the Syro Malabar and Malankara Churches – was held at the Missionary Orientation Centre, Manganam, Kottayam on the 10th and 11th of June 1992. There were two papers: the first by Fr. Sebastian Naduthadam on the Anaphora of Mar Nestorius. This Anaphora which is very

ancient is one of the three Anaphoras accepted and acknowledged for the Syro Malabar Church by the Holy See. Its antiquity and its theology are credits to the syro Malabar Church, the author contended. It is said by the East Syrian Churches five times a year. The Syro Malabarians, for some unknown reason, do not use this Anaphora after the Synod of Diamper.

A second paper was presented by Fr. Joseph Koikakudy on the Syro Malabar Church and the SMBC: The Syro Malabar Bishops' Conference. The speaker began by saying that while it is true that the Syro Malabar Church has not the juridical structure envisaged in the CCEO, it is not correct, as some do, to say that neither the SMBC exists. When the juridical structure comes into being, the SMBC will automatically cease to be, but not before: for the SMBC is a voluntary organization the statutes of which have been approved by the Holy See. Therefore in order that it cease, either the Holy See has to suppress it, or the juridical structure as envisaged in the Code has to be granted to the Syro Malabar Church. Besides, the Church is alive and acts. It does not act in a vacuum. The conclusion is that it acts through the SMBC: therefore to the question whether the SMBC exists at present, the answer is an emphatic YES.

During question time, it was unanimously agreed that the Church must, in view of its antiquity, vitality and personnel spending themselves for the spread of God's Kingdom and the vast potentialities which the Church has, ask the Holy See for the establishment of a Patriarchate.

Consecration of chaldean church in Paris

On 7th June 1992, the Patriarch of the Chaldean Church, Mar Raphael I. B. Dawid, consecrated the Church Notre Dame de Chaldée and later inaugurated the centre "Eglise d'Orient." His Eminence Cardinal Jesus Marie Lustinger, Archbishop of Paris, the Ordinary of the Eastern Catholics who have no ordinary of their own in France presided over the religious ceremony in the presence of Archbishop Lorenzo Antonetti, Apostolic Nuncio in France. The Chaldeans have only a Patriarchal vicar in France, Fr. Patros Yousif. This is significant and an example to the Churches of India. The Catholics seem to be aware of the conciliar idea that the Catholic Church is a communion of Churches and live it.

We are very happy to inform you that the OIRSI has been officially authorized by the Vatican and the Canon Law Society of America to reprint an Indian edition of the new CODE OF CANONS FOR THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES.

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We are profoundly thankful to Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Chediath for his meritorious service as the Editor of Ecumenism Section for five years. We extend our cordial welcome to Rev. Dr. Joseph Kallarangattu our new Section Editor. He holds doctorate in Ecclesiology from Gregorian University.

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